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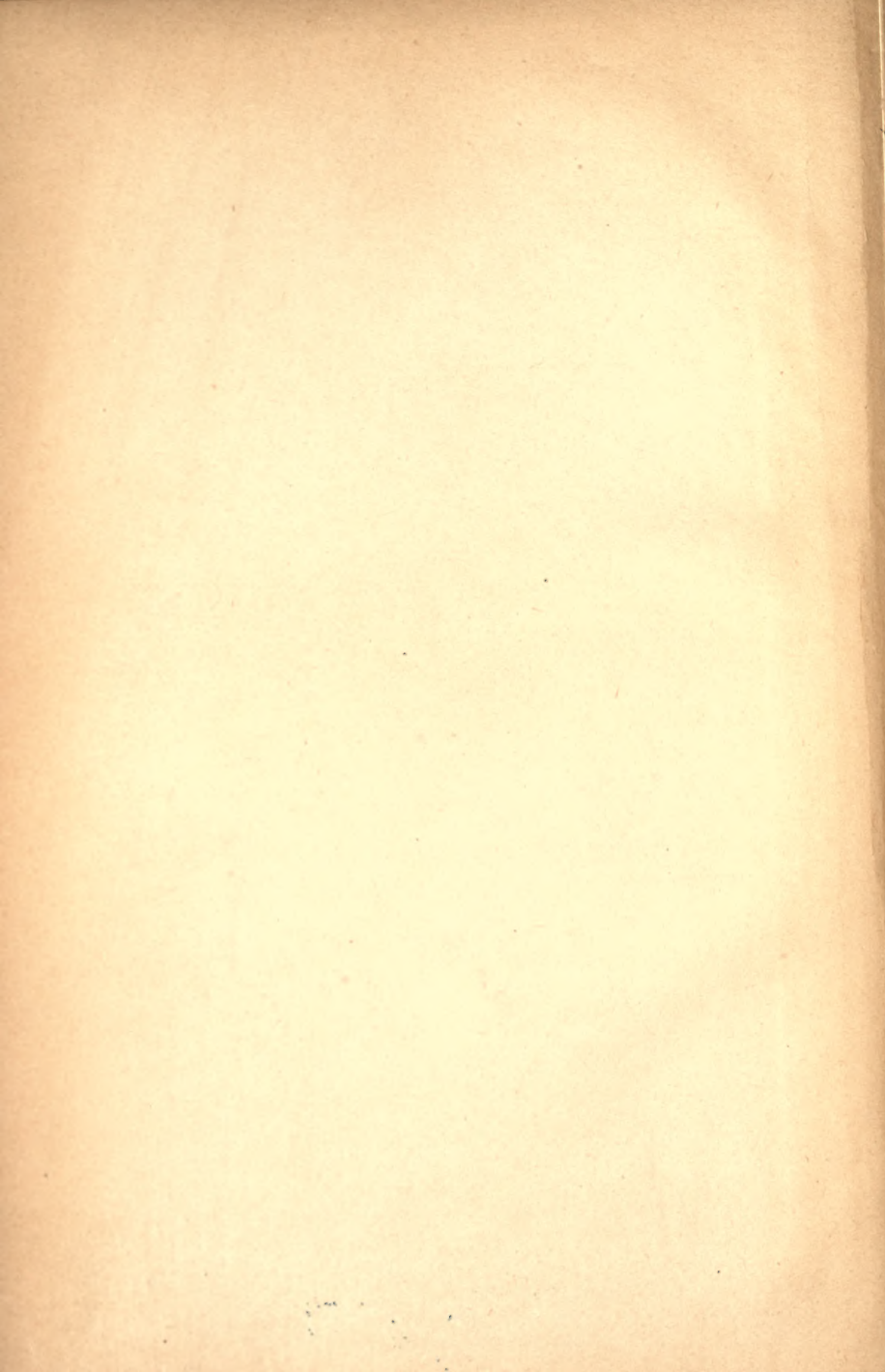


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THIRD SERIES
OF
LECTURES TO MY STUDENTS.

The Art of Illustration:

BEING

ADDRESSES DELIVERED TO THE STUDENTS

OF

The Pastors' College,
METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

President.

London:

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1905.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

MR. SPURGEON, in his preface to the Second Series of *Lectures to my Students*, wrote:—"I seize the present opportunity to call attention to the second of my three books for students, for this is properly *the third*. I allude to the volume entitled, *Commenting and Commentaries*. It embodies the experience and information of a lifetime; but, being very much occupied with a Catalogue of Commentaries, it cannot commend itself to popular tastes, and must be confined in its circulation to those who wish for information upon expository works. To my own surprise, it is in the tenth thousand,* but numbers of readers to whom it might be valuable have not yet seen it. As almost all the reviewers speak of it with much praise, I think it will be worth any young man's while to buy it before he gets far on in the formation of a library. It is on my heart, if life is spared, to issue six half-crown books for preachers; the fourth, which is much of it prepared, will be occupied with *The Art of Illustration*, and I am anxious in no one instance to waste time and labour upon books which will not be read. Hence my reason for mentioning the Commenting book in this place. Life is short, and time is precious to a busy man. Whatever we do, we wish to make the most of."

Accordingly, Mrs. Spurgeon thought that, after the publication of her dear husband's Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew,—*The Gospel of the Kingdom*, that pathetically-precious volume that memorializes the author's transition from preaching the Gospel on earth to entering the Kingdom in heaven,—the first of his unfinished books to be completed must be the one to which he had himself given the title, *The Art of Illustration*, and for which he had so long and so carefully been gathering the materials. Hence the issue of the present work.

Of the seven lectures included in this volume, the first two were revised and stereotyped during Mr. Spurgeon's lifetime. Three of the others were partially revised by him, before being re-delivered to a later company

* *Commenting and Commentaries* is now (1897), in the fourteenth thousand.

of students than those who heard them for the first time. The two remaining lectures are printed substantially as they appeared in the reporter's transcripts ; only such verbal corrections have been made as were absolutely necessary to ensure accuracy of statement so far as it could be ascertained. It was a providential arrangement that, just as the lecture on "The Science of Astronomy as a Source of Illustration" was being prepared for the press, a book entitled, *The Voices of the Stars*, by J. E. WALKER, M.A. (Elliot Stock), was received for review in *The Sword and the Trowel*. As the author of that very valuable volume has taken great pains "to verify, on the highest authority, the facts which are the basis of the theological and spiritual correspondences" pointed out in his work, we have been glad to avail ourselves of his figures, in certain instances, so as to bring the lecture down to date ; and we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to Mr. Walker for this assistance.

Of course, it is needless to say that this volume of lectures is not what Mr. Spurgeon would have made it had he been spared to see it published ; but, fully recognising that fact, every possible effort has been exerted to make the work as helpful as possible to those for whom it is specially intended.

In the catalogue of books of anecdotes, illustrations, etc., the "etc." has been rather widely interpreted so as to include the *Sword and Trowel* reviews of all works of the kind that were likely to be useful to ministers, students, local preachers, Sunday-school teachers, and Christian workers generally. The notices of these illustrative volumes, which appeared in "Mr. Spurgeon's Magazine" up to the time of his promotion to glory, were almost (if not quite) all written by himself ; so that, with Lectures V. and VI., and Appendix A, readers will be able to see what the late Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle judged to be the best books of this nature that had come before his notice. He was himself such a master of "The Art of Illustration" that his opinions upon the subject have the added weight of long practical experience ; and this will, doubtless, make them of great value to others.

It was necessary to adopt some kind of order for the reviews ; and as any other arrangement would have seemed invidious, it was decided that the notices should be printed as they appeared, chronologically, in the Magazine. The published prices of the books are given as a guidance to intending purchasers ; and in the case of works reviewed, but now out of print, that fact is stated, to prevent disappointment to

readers, and useless enquiries of publishers. It may be that books which are out of print can still be obtained of second-hand booksellers. Where the volumes have passed out of the hands of the original publishers, the names of the present publishers have been inserted, with the prices at which the books can now be bought.

The issue of this volume will awaken, in the minds of the ministers educated in the Pastors' College, many memories of their "peerless President." The happy Friday afternoons, when these and similar lectures were delivered to them, will never fade from the recollection of the highly-privileged band of brethren who had the honour of sitting at the feet of C. H. Spurgeon. Those who read the contents of this book, and the three previous series of lectures, will understand, in part at least, how it is that "Spurgeon's men" increasingly mourn the loss of their loved leader; but they can never fully know all that, under God, he was to his sons in the faith. Oh, that everyone who came under his blessed influence might be more like him, and so become, as he was, "a good minister of Jesus Christ"!

For the information of friends who are not fully aware of the character and purpose of Mr. Spurgeon's *Lectures to my Students*, it may be well to reproduce here what he, almost apologetically, wrote when submitting former specimens of them to the judgment of the general public:—"My College lectures are colloquial, familiar, full of anecdote, and often humorous: they are purposely made so, to suit the occasion. At the end of the week I meet the students, and find them weary with sterner studies, and I judge it best to be as lively and interesting in my prelections as I well can be. They have had their fill of classics, mathematics, and divinity, and are only in a condition to receive something which will attract and secure their attention, and fire their hearts. Our venerable tutor, Mr. Rogers, compares my Friday work to the sharpening of the pin: the fashioning of the head, the straightening, the laying on of the metal, and the polishing, have been done during the week, and then the process concludes with an effort to give point and sharpness. To succeed in this, the lecturer must not be dull himself, nor demand any great effort from his audience. I am as much at home with my young brethren as in the bosom of my family, and therefore speak without restraint. . . . At any rate, I do not offer that which has cost me nothing, for I have done my best, and taken abundant pains. Therefore, with clear conscience I place my work at the service of my brethren, especially hoping to have a careful reading from young

preachers, whose profiting has been my principal aim. I have made my addresses entirely for students and beginners in preaching, and I beg that they may always be regarded from that point of view, for many remarks which are proper enough to be made to raw recruits it would be gross impertinence to place before masters in Israel. The intent and object will be borne in mind by every candid reader."

Some time before he was called home, Mr. Spurgeon had employed a friend to select from his published sermons all the *Anecdotes and Illustrations* he had used in preaching. It was his intention to issue these in a number of small volumes which he hoped would prove helpful to other preachers and speakers. Possibly, the first of this series may speedily follow the present work, as it would be an appropriate sequel to *The Art of Illustration*. In the meantime, as a second Appendix to this book, a list is given of all the illustrative works by Mr. Spurgeon already published. There are many more of his *Lectures to my Students* that have not yet been printed, including a course on the important subject of *Soul-winning*; these are in preparation for the press, and will be published when the opportunity occurs.

Now, having finished our task—by no means an easy one—with the ever-present remembrance of the beloved President and Pastor who would have done the work immeasurably better, yet with devout thankfulness that another volume of his gracious and happy utterances is completed, we close our "Introductory Notes" with Mr. Spurgeon's own words in launching the previous series of lectures:—"Hoping that some benefit may accrue to the rising race of preachers, and through them to the Church of God, this book is offered to the Lord's service, in the hope that he will use it for his own glory."

J. W. H.

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The following Works by Mr. SPURGEON belong to this series:—

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When a preacher, be he lay or regular, finds himself severely pressed for a subject, he will find here an outline clearly drawn, a good deal of filling up, and a little lot of stories or pithy bits to season the whole.—C. H. S.

Mr. Spurgeon had other works of a similar character in preparation, which will be issued if the Lord will. In one of the volumes previously published, he wrote:—"It is hoped that THE COLLEGE SERIES may render efficient service to preachers of the Gospel. Friends who appreciate the books will greatly oblige by making them known to others. The same motive which prompted the author to write, leads him to desire a large circle of readers." Now that the beloved president has been called home, it is more important than ever that his books should be placed in the hands of the young preachers who will not have the privilege of hearing his voice.

LECTURE I.

Illustrations in Preaching.

THE topic now before us is the use of illustrations in our sermons. Perhaps we shall best subserve our purpose by working out an illustration in the present address; for there is no better way of teaching the art of pottery than by making a pot. Quaint Thomas Fuller says, "reasons are the pillars of the fabric of a sermon; but similitudes are the windows which give the best lights." The comparison is happy and suggestive, and we will build up our discourse under its direction.

The chief reason for the construction of windows in a house is, as Fuller says, *to let in light*. Parables, similes, and metaphors have that effect; and hence we use them to *illustrate* our subject, or, in other words, to "*brighten it with light*," for that is Dr. Johnson's literal rendering of the word *illustrate*. Often when didactic speech fails to enlighten our hearers we may make them see our meaning by opening a window and letting in the pleasant light of analogy. Our Saviour, who is the light of the world, took care to fill his speech with similitudes, so that the common people heard him gladly: his example stamps with high authority the practice of illuminating heavenly instruction with comparisons and similes. To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, "A window shalt thou make in the ark." You may build up laborious definitions and explanations and yet leave your hearers in the dark as to your meaning; but a thoroughly suitable metaphor will wonderfully clear the sense. The pictures in *The Illustrated London News* give us a far better idea of the scenery which they represent than could be conveyed to us by the best descriptive letter-press; and it is much the same with Scriptural teaching: abstract truth comes before us so much more vividly when a concrete example is given, or the doctrine itself is clothed in figurative language. There should, if possible, be at least one good metaphor in the

shortest address; as Ezekiel, in his vision of the temple, saw that even to the little chambers there were windows suitable to their size. If we are faithful to the spirit of the gospel we labour to make things plain: it is our study to be simple and to be understood by the most illiterate of our hearers; let us, then, set forth many a metaphor and parable before the people. He wrote wisely who said, "The world below me is a glass in which I may see the world above. The works of God are the shepherd's calendar and the ploughman's alphabet." Having nothing to conceal, we have no ambition to be obscure. Lycophron declared that he would hang himself upon a tree if he found a person who could understand his poem entitled "The Prophecy of Cassandra." Happily no one arose to drive him to such a misuse of timber. We think we could find brethren in the ministry who might safely run the same risk in connection with their sermons. Still have we among us those who are like Heraclitus, who was called "the Dark Doctor" because his language was beyond all comprehension. Certain mystical discourses are so dense that if light were admitted into them it would be extinguished like a torch in the Grotta del Cane: they are made up of the palpably obscure and the inexplicably involved, and all hope of understanding them may be abandoned. This style of oratory we do not cultivate. We are of the same mind as Joshua Shute, who said: "That sermon has most learning in it that has most plainness. Hence it is that a great scholar was wont to say, 'Lord, give me learning enough, that I may preach plain enough.'"

Windows greatly add to the pleasure and agreeableness of a habitation, and so do *illustrations make a sermon pleasurable and interesting*. A building without windows would be a prison rather than a house, for it would be quite dark, and no one would care to take it upon lease; and, in the same way, a discourse without a parable is prosy and dull, and involves a grievous weariness of the flesh. The preacher in Solomon's Ecclesiastes "sought to find out acceptable words," or, as the Hebrew has it, "words of delight": surely, figures and comparisons are delectable to our hearers. Let us not deny them the salt of parable with the meat of doctrine. Our congregations hear us with pleasure when we give them a fair measure of imagery: when an anecdote is being told they rest, take breath, and give play to their imaginations, and thus prepare themselves for the sterner work which lies before them in listening to our profounder expositions. Riding in a third-class carriage some years ago in the eastern counties, we

had been for a long time without a lamp; and when a traveller lighted a candle, it was pleasant to see how all eyes turned that way, and rejoiced in the light: such is frequently the effect of an apt simile in the midst of a sermon, it lights up the whole matter, and gladdens every heart. Even the little children open their eyes and ears, and a smile brightens up their faces as we tell a story; for they, too, rejoice in the light which streams in through our windows. We dare say they often wish that the sermon were all illustrations, even as the boy desired to have a cake made all of plums; but that must not be: there is a happy medium, and we must keep to it by making our discourse pleasant hearing, but not a mere pastime. No reason exists why the preaching of the gospel should be a miserable operation either to the speaker or to the hearer. Pleasantly profitable let all our sermons be. A house must not have thick walls without openings, neither must a discourse be all made up of solid slabs of doctrine without a window of comparison or a lattice of poetry; if so, our hearers will gradually forsake us, and prefer to stay at home and read their favourite authors whose lively tropes and vivid images afford more pleasure to their minds.

Every architect will tell you that he looks upon his windows as *an opportunity for introducing ornament into his design*. A pile may be massive, but it cannot be pleasing if it is not broken up with windows and other details. The palace of the popes at Avignon is an immense structure; but the external windows are so few that it has all the aspect of a colossal prison, and suggests nothing of what a palace should be. Sermons need to be broken up, varied, decorated, and enlivened; and nothing can do this so well as the introduction of types, emblems, and instances. Of course, ornament is not the main point to be considered; but still, many little excellences go to make up perfection, and this is one of the many, and therefore it should not be overlooked. When wisdom built her house she hewed out her seven pillars, for glory and for beauty, as well as for the support of the structure; and shall we think that any rough hovel is good enough for the beauty of holiness to dwell in? Certainly a gracious discourse is none the better for being bereft of every grace of language. Meretricious ornament we deprecate, but an appropriate beauty of speech we cultivate. Truth is a king's daughter, and her raiment should be of wrought gold; her house is a palace, and it should be adorned with "windows of agate and gates of carbuncle."

Illustrations tend to enliven an audience and quicken attention.

Windows, when they will open, which, alas, is not often the case in our places of worship, are a great blessing by refreshing and reviving the audience with a little pure air, and arousing the poor mortals who are rendered sleepy by the stagnant atmosphere. A window should, according to its name, be a wind-door, through which a breath of air may visit the audience; even so, an original figure, a noble image, a quaint comparison, a rich allegory, should open upon our hearers a breeze of happy thought, which will pass over them like life-giving breath, arousing them from their apathy, and quickening their faculties to receive the truth. Those who are accustomed to the soporific sermonizings of certain dignified divines would marvel greatly if they could see the enthusiasm and lively delight with which congregations listen to speech through which there flows a quiet current of happy, natural illustration. Arid as a desert are many volumes of discourses which are to be met with upon the booksellers' dust-covered shelves; but if in the course of a thousand paragraphs they contain a single simile, it is as an oasis in the Sahara, and serves to keep the reader's soul alive. In fashioning a discourse think little of the bookworm, which will be sure of its portion of meat however dry your doctrine, but have pity upon those hungering ones immediately around you who must find life through your sermon or they will never find it at all. If some of your hearers sleep on they will of necessity wake up in eternal perdition, for they hear no other helpful voice.

While we thus commend illustrations for necessary uses, it must be remembered that they are not the strength of a sermon any more than a window is the strength of a house; and for this reason, among others, *they should not be too numerous*. Too many openings for light may seriously detract from the stability of a building. We have known sermons so full of metaphors that they became weak, and we had almost said *crazy*, structures. Sermons must not be nosegays of flowers, but sheaves of wheat. Very beautiful sermons are generally very useless ones. To aim at elegance is to court failure. It is possible to have too much of a good thing: a glass house is not the most comfortable of abodes, and besides other objectionable qualities it has the great fault of being sadly tempting to stonethrowers. When a critical adversary attacks our metaphors he generally makes short work of them. To friendly minds images are arguments, but to opponents they are opportunities for attack; the enemy climbs up by the window. Comparisons are swords with two edges which cut both ways;

and frequently what seems a sharp and telling illustration may be wittily turned against you, so as to cause a laugh at your expense: therefore do not rely upon your metaphors and parables. Even a second-rate man may defend himself from a superior mind if he can dexterously turn his assailant's gun upon himself. Here is an instance which concerns myself, and I give it for that reason, since these lectures have all along been autobiographical. I give a cutting from one of our religious papers. "Mr. Beecher has been neatly tripped up in '*The Sword and the Trowel*.' In his '*Lectures on Preaching*' he asserts that Mr. Spurgeon has succeeded 'in spite of his Calvinism;' adding the remark that 'the camel does not travel any better, nor is it any more useful, because of the hump on its back.' The illustration is not a felicitous one, for Mr. Spurgeon thus retorts:—'Naturalists assure us the camel's hump is of great importance in the eyes of the Arabs, who judge of the condition of their beasts by the size, shape, and firmness of their humps. The camel feeds upon his hump when he traverses the wilderness, so that in proportion as the animal travels over the sandy wastes, and suffers from privation and fatigue, the mass diminishes; and he is not fit for a long journey till the hump has regained its proportions. Calvinism, then, is the spiritual meat which enables a man to labour on in the ways of Christian service; and, though ridiculed as a hump by those who are only lookers-on, those who traverse the weary paths of a wilderness experience know too well its value to be willing to part with it, even if a Beecher's splendid talents could be given in exchange.'"

Illustrate, by all means, but do not let the sermon be all illustrations, or it will be only suitable for an assembly of simpletons. A volume is all the better for engravings, but a scrap-book which is all woodcuts is usually intended for the use of little children. Our house should be built up with the substantial masonry of doctrine, upon the deep foundation of inspiration; its pillars should be of solid Scriptural argument, and every stone of truth should be carefully laid in its place; and then the windows should be ranged in due order, "three rows" if we will: "light against light," like the house of the forest of Lebanon. But a house is not erected for the sake of the windows, nor may a sermon be arranged with the view of fitting in a favourite apologue. A window is merely a convenience subordinate to the entire design, and so is the best illustration. We shall be foolish indeed if we compose a discourse to display a metaphor; as foolish as if an

architect should build a cathedral with the view of exhibiting a stained glass window. We are not sent into the world to build a Crystal Palace in which to set out works of art and elegancies of fashion; but as wise master-builders we are to edify, spiritual house for the divine inhabiting. Our building is intended to last, and is meant for everyday use, and hence it must not be all crystal and colour. We miss our way altogether, as gospel ministers, if we aim at flash and finery.

It is impossible to lay down a rule as to how much adornment shall be found in each discourse: every man must judge for himself in that matter. True taste in dress could not be readily defined, yet everyone knows what it is; and there is a literary and spiritual taste which should be displayed in the measuring out of tropes and figures in every public speech. "*Ne quid nimis*" is a good caution: do not be too eager to garnish and adorn. Some men seem never to have enough of metaphors: each one of their sentences must be a flower. They compass sea and land to find a fresh piece of coloured glass for their windows, and they break down the walls of their discourses to let in superfluous ornaments, till their productions rather resemble a fantastic grotto than a house to dwell in. They are grievously in error if they think that thus they manifest their own wisdom, or benefit their hearers. I could almost wish for a return of the window-tax if it would check these poetical brethren. The law, I believe, allowed eight windows free from duty, and we might also exempt "a few, that is eight" metaphors from criticism; but more than that ought to pay heavily. Flowers upon the table at a banquet are well enough; but as nobody can live upon bouquets, they will become objects of contempt if they are set before us in lieu of substantial viands. The difference between a little salt with your meat and being compelled to empty the salt-cellar is clear to all; and we could wish that those who pour out so many symbols, emblems, figures, and devices would remember that nausea in oratory is not more agreeable than in food. Enough is as good as a feast; and too many pretty things may be a greater evil than none at all.

It is a suggestive fact that the tendency to abound in metaphor and illustration becomes weaker as men grow older and wiser. Perhaps this may, in a measure, be ascribed to the decay of their imagination; but it also occurs at the same time as the ripening of their understanding. Some may have to use fewer figures of necessity, because they do not come to them as aforetime; but this is not always the case. I know that men who still possess great

facility in imagery find it less needful to employ that faculty now than in their earlier days, for they have the ear of the people, and they are solemnly resolved to fill that ear with instruction as condensed as they can make it. When you begin with a people who have not heard the gospel, and whose attention you have to win, you can hardly go too far in the use of figure and metaphor. Our Lord Jesus Christ used very much of it; indeed, "without a parable spake he not unto them;" because they were not educated up to the point at which they could profitably hear pure didactic truth. It is noticeable that after the Holy Ghost had been given, fewer parables were used, and the saints were more plainly taught of God. When Paul spoke or wrote to the churches in his epistles he employed few parables, because he addressed those who were advanced in grace and willing to learn. As Christian minds made progress the style of their teachers became less figurative, and more plainly doctrinal. We seldom see engravings in the classics of the college; these are reserved for the spelling-books of the dame-school. This should teach us wisdom, and suggest that we are to be bound by no hard and fast rules, but should use more or less of any mode of teaching according to our own condition and that of our people.

Illustrations should really cast light upon the subject in hand, otherwise they are sham windows, and all shams are an abomination. When the window-tax was still in force many people in country houses closed half their lights by plastering them up, and then they had the plaster painted to look like panes; so that there was still the appearance of a window, though no sunlight could enter. Well do I remember the dark rooms in my grandfather's parsonage, and my wonder that men should have to pay for the light of the sun. Blind windows are fit emblems of illustrations which illustrate nothing, and need themselves to be explained. Grandiloquence is never more characteristic than in its figures; there it disports itself in a very carnival of bombast. We could quote several fine specimens of sublime spread-eagleism and magnificent nonsense, but one alone may suffice as a favourable sample of a form of display which is rather mere common across the water than in these old-fashioned regions. The author's name we will not mention, but the extract is given verbatim, and is taken from a sermon upon "To die is gain." Let the young preacher ponder and wonder, but let him not imitate. We give the whole passage for the sake of the frigate bird, and the granite porphyry-jasper staircase.

“There is a bird that mariners call the ‘frigate bird,’ of strange habits and of stranger power. Men see him in all climes, but never yet has human eye seen him near the earth. With wings of mighty stretch, high borne, he sails along. Men of the far north see him at midnight moving on amid auroral fires, sailing along with set wings amid those awful flames, taking the colour of the waves of light which swell and heave around him. Men in the tropics see him at hottest noon, his plumage all incandined by the fierce rays that smite innocuous upon him. Amid their ardent fervour, he bears along, majestic, tireless. Never was he known to stoop from his lofty line of flight, never to swerve. To many he is a myth, to all a mystery. Where is his perch? [This is fine indeed. Let us add, “Who shall lay salt on his tail?”] Where does he rest? Where was he brooded? None know. They only know that above cloud, above the reach of tempest, above the tumult of transverse currents, this bird of heaven (so let us call him) on self-supporting vans that disdain to beat the air on which they rest, moves grandly on. [Grand idea! The critter flies without moving his wings, disdaining to beat the air, as well he may, for he beats all creation.] So shall my hope be. At either pole of life, above the clouds of sorrow, superior to the tempests that beat upon me, on lofty and tireless wing, scorning the earth, it shall move along. Never shall it stoop, never swerve from its sublime line of flight. They shall see it in the morning of my life; they shall see it in its hot noon-day; and when the shadows fall, my sun having set, using your style of speech; but, using mine, when the shadows disappear, my sun having risen, the last they see of me shall be this hope of gain in dying, as it sails out on steady wing, and disappears amid the everlasting light.

“I feel, friends, that no exhortation of mine will lift you to this pedestal of hewn granite, on which it is given to monumental piety to stand. [Quite right: an exhortation cannot very well lift a body on to a pedestal; it needs a leg or an arm to do that. But what is monumental piety?] Only by analysis, by meditation, by thought that ponders in the night time the majestic utterances of Scripture, and by the open lattice—or, better yet, beneath the grand dome—bows in prayer, and holds communion with the possibilities that stand beyond this life, like unfilled thrones waiting for occupants. Only in this way, and in others suggested by the Spirit to minds fit to receive them, will you or any ever rise to the level of the emotion which dictated the text. Where is Paul to-day? Where does he stand, who, from his prison at Rome, sent out this immortal

"saying? Is there one of us that has verified the statement that "to die is gain? Not one." [*Pretty safe question! Who among us has been dead?*] We know he walks in glory. He moves amid the majestic spaces where even Deity is not cramped. [*Eloquent or blasphemous, which?*] After all his struggles, he has entered into rest. Yet what has he received that is not in reserve for us? What has he that has not come to him in the way of gift? And is not his God mine and yours? Will the eternal Father feed with a partial hand? Will he discriminate, and become a respecter of persons, even at his own table? Piety can never receive into its mind the awful suspicion. Our Father feeds his children alike; and the garments that they wear are cut from a royal fabric, even his righteousness. They shine like suns brought by the action of a sublime movement into conjunction. Rise, then, my friends, ye people of his love; rise and climb with me the mighty stairway whose steps are changed from granite to porphyry, and from porphyry to jasper, as we ascend, until our feet, pure as itself, stand on the sea of crystal which stretches in seamless purity before the throne." [*Upstairs to the sea! And up three pair of stairs too! Sublime idea, or, at least, within a step of it.*]

This piece of high-flown oratory sheds light upon nothing, and does not in the faintest degree enable us to understand the reason why "to die is gain." The object of language of this kind is not to instruct the hearer, but to dazzle him, and if possible to impress him with the idea that his minister is a wonderful orator. He who condescends to use clap-trap of any kind deserves to be debarred the pulpit for the term of his natural life. Let your figures of speech really represent and explain your meaning, or else they are dumb idols, which ought not to be set up in the house of the Lord.

It may be well to note that *illustrations should not be too prominent*, or, to pursue our figure, they should not be painted windows, attracting attention to themselves rather than letting in the clear light of day. I am not pronouncing any judgment upon windows adorned with "glass of various colours which shine like meadows decked in the flowers of spring"; I am looking only to my illustration. Our figures are meant not so much to be seen as to be seen through. If you take the hearer's mind away from the subject by exciting his admiration of your own skill in imagery, you are doing evil rather than good. I saw in one of our exhibitions a

portrait of a king; but the artist had surrounded his majesty with a bower of flowers so exquisitely painted that everyone's eye was taken away from the royal figure. All the resources of the painter's art had been lavished upon the accessories, and the result was that the portrait, which should have been all in all, had fallen into a secondary place. This was surely an error in portrait-painting, even though it might be a success in art. We have to set forth Christ before the people, "evidently crucified among them," and the loveliest emblem or the most charming image which calls the mind away from our divine subject is to be conscientiously foresworn. Jesus must be all in all: his gospel must be the beginning and end of all our discoursing; parable and poesy must be under his feet, and eloquence must wait upon him as his servant. Never by any possibility must the minister's speech become a rival to his subject; that were to dishonour Christ, and not to glorify him. Hence the caution that the illustrations be not too conspicuous.

Out of this last observation comes the further remark that *illustrations are best when they are natural, and grow out of the subject*. They should be like those well-arranged windows which are evidently part of the plan of a structure, and not inserted as an afterthought, or for mere adornment. The cathedral of Milan inspires my mind with extreme admiration; it always appears to me as if it must have grown out of the earth like a colossal tree or rather like a forest of marble. From its base to its loftiest pinnacle every detail is a natural outgrowth, a portion of a well developed whole, essential to the main idea; indeed, part and parcel of it. Such should a sermon be; its exordium, divisions, arguments, appeals, and metaphors should all spring out of itself; nothing should be out of living relation to the rest; it should seem as if nothing could be added without being an excrescence, and nothing taken away without inflicting damage. There should be flowers in a sermon, but the bulk of them should be the flowers of the soil; not dainty exotics, evidently imported with much care from a distant land, but the natural upspringing of a life natural to the holy ground on which the preacher stands. Figures of speech should be congruous with the matter of the discourse; a rose upon an oak would be out of place, and a lily springing from a poplar would be unnatural: everything should be of a piece and have a manifest relationship to the rest. Occasionally a little barbaric splendour may be allowed after the manner of Thomas Adams and Jeremy Taylor and other masters in Israel,

who adorn truth with rare gems, and gold of Ophir, fetched from far. Yet I would have you note what Dr. Hamilton says of Taylor, for it is a warning to those who aim at winning the ear of the multitude. "Thoughts, epithets, incidents, images came trooping round with irrepressible profusion, and they were all so apt and beautiful, that it was hard to send any of them away. And so he tried to find a place and use for all,—for 'flowers and wings of butterflies,' as well as 'wheat ;'—and if he could not fabricate links of his logical chain out of 'the little rings of the vine,' and 'the locks of a new-weaned boy,' he could at least decorate his subject with exquisite adornments. The passages from his loved Austin and Chrysostom, and not less beloved Seneca and Plutarch, the scholar knows how to pardon. The squirrel is not more tempted to carry nuts to his hoard than the bookish author is tempted to transfer to his own pages fine passages from his favourite authors. Alas! he little knows how flat and meaningless they are to those who have not traversed the same walks, and shared the delight with which he found great spoil. To him each polished shell recalls its autumnal tale of woods, and groves, and sunshine showering through the yellow leaves; but to the quaint collection 'the general public' very much prefer a pint of filberts from a huckster's barrow." No illustrations are half so telling as those which are taken from familiar objects. Many fair flowers grow in foreign lands; but those are dearest to the heart which bloom at our own cottage door.

Elaboration into minute points is not commendable when we are using figures. The best light comes in through the clearest glass: too much paint keeps out the sun. God's altar of old was to be made of earth, or of unhewn stone, "for," said the word, "if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it:" Ex. xx. 25. A laboured, artificial style, upon which the graver's tool has left abundant marks, is more consistent with human pleadings in courts of law, or in the forum, or in the senate, than with prophetic utterances delivered in the name of God and for the promotion of his glory. Our Lord's parables were as simple as tales for children, and as naturally beautiful as the lilies which sprang up in the valleys where he taught the people. He borrowed no legend from the Talmud, nor fairy tale from Persia, neither fetched he his emblems from beyond the sea; but he dwelt among his own people, and talked of common things in homely style, as never man spake before, and yet as any observant man should speak. His parables were like himself and his surroundings; and were never strained,

fantastic, pedantic, or artificial. Let us imitate him, for we shall never find a model more complete, or more suitable for the present age. Opening our eyes, we shall discover abundant imagery all around. As it is written, "The word is nigh thee," so also is the analogy of that word near at hand :—

"All things around me whate'er they be
That I meet as the chance may come,
Have a voice and a speech in them all—
Birds that hover, and bees that hum,
The beast of the field or the stall ;
The trees, leaves, rushes, and grasses ;
The rivulet running away ;
The bird of the air as it passes ;
Or the mountains that motionless stay ,
And yet those immovable masses
Keep changing, as dreams do, all day."*

There will be little need to borrow from the recondite mysteries of human art, nor to go deep into the theories of science ; for in nature golden illustrations lie upon the surface, and the purest is that which is uppermost and most readily discerned. Of natural history in all its branches we may well say, "the gold of that land is good": the illustrations furnished by everyday phenomena seen by the ploughman and the waggoner are the very best which earth can yield. An illustration is not like a prophet, for it has most honour in its own country ; and those who have oftenest seen the object are those who are most gratified by the figure drawn from it.

I trust that it is scarcely necessary to add that *illustrations must never be low or mean*. They may not be high-flown, but they should always be in good taste. They may be homely, and yet chastely beautiful ; but rough and coarse they should never be. A house is dishonoured by having dirty windows, cobwebbed and begrimed, patched with brown paper, or stuffed up with rags : such windows are the insignia of a hovel rather than a house. About our illustrations there must never be even the slightest trace of anything that would shock the most delicate modesty. We like not that window out of which Jezebel is looking. Like the bells upon the horses, our lightest expressions must be holiness unto the Lord. Of that which suggests the grovelling and the base we may say with the apostle, "Let it not be once named

* Slightly altered from "Fables in Song." By Robert Lord Lytton. William Blackwood and Sons 1874. 2 vols.

among you, as becometh saints." All our windows should open towards Jerusalem, and none towards Sodom. We will gather our flowers always and only from Emmanuel's land; and Jesus himself shall be their savour and sweetness, so that when he lingers at the lattice to hear us speak of himself he may say "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue." That which grows beyond the border of purity and good repute must never be bound up in our garlands, nor placed among the decorations of our discourses. That which would be exceedingly clever and telling in a stump orator's speech, or in a cheap-jack's harangue, would be disgusting from a minister of the gospel. Time was when we could have found far too many specimens of censurable coarseness, but it would be ungenerous to mention them now that such things are on all hands condemned.

Gentlemen, take care that your windows are not broken, or even cracked: in other words, *guard against confused metaphors and limping illustrations*. Sir Boyle Roche is generally credited with some of the finest specimens of metaphorical conglomerate. We should imagine that the passage is mythical in which he is represented as saying, "I smell a rat; I see it floating in the air; I'll nip it in the bud." Minor blunderings are frequent enough in the speech of our own countrymen. An excellent temperance advocate exclaimed, "Comrades, let us be up and doing! Let us take our axes on our shoulders, and plough the waste places till the good ship Temperance sails gaily over the land." We well remember, years ago, hearing a fervent Irish clergyman exclaim, "Garibaldi, sir, he is far too great a man to play second fiddle to such a wretched luminary as Victor Emmanuel." It was at a public meeting, and therefore we were bound to be proper; but it would have been a great relief to our soul if we might have indulged in a hearty laugh at the spectacle of Garibaldi with a fiddle, playing to a luminary; for a certain nursery rhyme jingled in our ears, and sorely tried our gravity. A poetic friend thus encouragingly addresses us,—

"March on, however rough the road,
Though foes obstruct thy way,
Deaf to the barking curs that would
Ensnare thy feet astray."

The other evening a brother expressed his desire that we might "all be winners of souls, and bring the Lord's blood-bought jewels to cast their crowns at his feet." The words had such a pious ring about them that the audience did not observe the fractured

state of the expression. One of your own number hoped "that every student might be enabled to sound the gospel trumpet with such a clear and certain sound *that the blind might see.*" Perhaps he meant that they should open their eyes with astonishment at the terrific blast; but the figure would have been more congruous if he had said "that the deaf should hear. A Scotch writer, in referring to a proposal to use an organ in divine service, says:—"Nothing will *stem this avalanche* of will-worship and gross sin but the *falling back on the Word of God.*"

The Daily News in reviewing a book written by an eminent Nonconformist minister, complained that his metaphors were apt to be a little unmanageable, as when he spoke of something which had remained a secret until a strangely potent key was inserted among the hidden wards of the parental heart, and a rude wrench flung wide the floodgates and set free the imprisoned stream. However, there is no wonder that ordinary mortals commit blunders in figurative speech when even his late Infallible Holiness Pius IX. said of Mr. Gladstone that he "had suddenly come forward like a viper assailing the barque of St. Peter." A viper assailing a barque is rather too much for the most accommodating imagination, although some minds are ready for any marvels.

One of those reviews which reckon themselves to be the cream of the cream took pains to inform us that the Dean of Chichester, being the select preacher at St. Mary's, Oxford, "seized the opportunity to smite the Ritualists hip and thigh, *with great volubility and vivacity.*" Samson smote his foes with a great slaughter; but language is flexible.

These blunders are to be quoted by the page: I have given enough to let you see how readily the pitchers of metaphor may be cracked, and rendered unfit to carry our meaning. The ablest speaker may occasionally err in this direction; it is not a very serious matter, and yet like a dead fly it may spoil sweet ointment. A few brethren of my acquaintance are always off the lines; they muddle up every figure they touch, and as soon as they approach a metaphor we look for an accident. It might be wisdom on their part to shun all figures of speech till they know how to use them; for it is a great pity when illustrations are so confused as both to darken the sense and create diversion. Muddled metaphors are muddles indeed; let us give the people good illustrations or none at all.

At this point I will close my lecture, which is only meant to be an introduction to my subject, and not a full treatment of it.

LECTURE II.

Anecdotes from the Pulpit.

✓ IT is pretty generally admitted that sermons may wisely be adorned with a fair share of illustrations; but anecdotes used to that end are still regarded by the prudes of the pulpit with a measure of suspicion. They will come down low enough to quote an emblem, they will deign to use poetic imagery; but they cannot stoop to tell a simple, homely story. They would probably say in confidence to their younger brethren, "Beware how you lower yourselves and your sacred office by repeating anecdotes, which are best appreciated by the vulgar and uneducated." We would not retort by exhorting all men to abound in stories, for there ought to be discrimination. It is freely admitted that there are useful and admirable styles of oratory which would be disfigured by a rustic tale; and there are honoured brethren whose genius would never allow them to relate a story, for it would not appear suitable to their mode of thought. Upon these we would not even by implication hint at a censure; but when we are dealing with others who seem to be somewhat, and are not what they seem, we feel no tenderness; nay, we are even moved to assail their stilted greatness. If they sneer at anecdotes, we smile at *them* and their sneers, and wish them more sense and less starch. Affectation of intellectual superiority and love of rhetorical splendour have prevented many from setting forth gospel truth in the easiest imaginable manner, namely, by analogies drawn from common events. Because they could not condescend to men of low estate they have refrained from repeating incidents which would have accurately explained their meaning. Fearing to be thought vulgar, they have lost golden opportunities. As well might David have refused to sling one of the smooth stones at Goliath's brow because he found it in a common brook.

From individuals so lofty in their ideas nothing is likely to flow down to the masses of the people but a glacial eloquence,—a river

of ice. Dignity is a most poor and despicable consideration unless it be the dignity of turning many to righteousness ; and yet divines who have had scarcely enough of real dignity to save themselves from contempt, have swollen " huge as high Olympus " through the affectation of it. A young gentleman, after delivering an elaborate discourse, was told that not more than **five or six** in the congregation had been able to understand him. This he accepted as a tribute to his genius ; but I take leave to place him in the same class with another person who was accustomed to shake his head in the most profound manner that he might make his prelections the more impressive, and this had some effect with the groundlings, until a shrewd Christian woman made the remark that he did shake his head certainly, but that *there was nothing in it*. Those who are too refined to be simple need to be refined again. Luther has well put it in his Table-Talk : " Cursed are all preachers that in the church aim at high and hard things ; and neglecting the saving health of the poor unlearned people, seek their own honour and praise, and therefore try to please one or two great persons. *When I preach I sink myself deep down.*" It may be superfluous to remind you of the oft-quoted passage from George Herbert's " Country Parson," and yet I cannot omit it, because it is so much to my mind :—" The Parson also serves himself of the judgments of God, as of those of ancient times, so especially of the late ones ; and those most which are nearest to his parish ; for people are very attentive at such discourses, and think it behoves them to be so when God is so near them, and even over their heads. Sometimes he tells them stories and sayings of others, according as his text invites him ; for them also men heed, and remember better than exhortations ; which, though earnest, yet often die with the sermon, especially with country people, which are thick, and heavy, and hard to raise to a point of zeal and fervency, and need a mountain of fire to kindle them, but stories and sayings they will well remember."

It ought never to be forgotten that the great God himself, when he would instruct men, employs histories and biographies. Our Bible contains doctrines, promises, and precepts ; but these are not left alone, the whole book is vivified and illustrated by marvellous records of things said and done by God and by men. He who is taught of God values the sacred histories, and knows that in them there is a special fulness and forcibleness of instruction. Teachers of Scripture cannot do better than instruct their fellows after the manner of the Scriptures.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the great teacher of teachers, did not disdain the use of anecdotes. To my mind it seems clear that certain of his parables were facts and, consequently, anecdotes. May not the story of the Prodigal Son have been a literal truth? Were there not actual instances of an enemy sowing tares among the wheat? May not the rich fool who said—"Take thine ease," have been a photograph taken from the life? Did not Dives and Lazarus actually figure on the stage of history? Certainly the story of those who were crushed by the fall of the tower of Siloam, and the sad tragedy of the Galilæans, "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices," were matters of current Jewish gossip, and our Lord turned both of them to good account. What ~~HE~~ ~~HE~~ did we need not be ashamed to do. That we may do it with all wisdom and prudence let us seek the guidance of the Divine Spirit which rested upon him so continually.

I shall make up this present address by quoting the examples of great preachers, beginning with the era of the Reformation, and following on without any very rigid chronological order down to our own day. Examples are more powerful than precepts; hence I quote them.

First, let me mention that grand old preacher, *Hugh Latimer*, the most English of all our divines; and one whose influence over our land was undoubtedly most powerful. Southey says, "Latimer more than any other man promoted the Reformation by his preaching"; and in this he echoes the more important utterance of Ridley, who wrote from his prison, "I do think that the Lord hath placed old father Latimer to be his standard-bearer in our age and country against his mortal foe, Antichrist." If you have read any of his sermons, you must have been struck with the number of his quaint stories, seasoned with a homely humour which smacks of that Leicestershire farmhouse wherein he was brought up by a father who did yeoman's service, and a mother who milked thirty kine. No doubt we may attribute to these stories the breaking down of pews by the overwhelming rush of the people to hear him; and the general interest which his sermons excited. More of such preaching, and we should have less fear of the return of Popery. The common people heard him gladly, and his lively anecdotes accounted for much of their eager attention. A few of these narratives one could hardly repeat, for the taste of our age has happily improved in delicacy; but others are most admirable and instructive. Here are three of them:—

THE FRIAR'S MAN AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

"I will tell you now a pretty story of a friar, to refresh you withal. A limiter of the grey friars in the time of his limitation preached many times, and had but one sermon at all times ; which sermon was of the ten commandments. And because this friar had preached this sermon so often, one that heard it before told the friar's servant that his master was called 'Friar John Ten Commandments': wherefore the servant showed the friar his master thereof, and advised him to preach of some other matters ; for it grieved the servant to hear his master derided. Now, the friar made answer saying, 'Belike, then, thou canst say the ten commandments well, seeing thou hast heard them so many a time.' 'Yea,' said the servant, 'I warrant you.' 'Let me hear them,' saith the master ; then he began,—'Pride, covetousness, lechery,' and so numbered the deadly sins for the ten commandments. And so there be many at this time, which be weary of the old gospel ; they would fain hear some new things: they think themselves so perfect in the old, when they be no more skilful than this servant was in his ten commandments."

S. ANTHONY AND THE COBBLER.

"We read a pretty story of S. Anthony, which, being in the wilderness, led there a very hard and straight life, insomuch as none at that time did the like. To whom came a voice from heaven, saying, 'Anthony, thou art not so perfect as is a cobbler that dwelleth at Alexandria.' Anthony, hearing this, rose up forthwith, and took his staff and went till he came to Alexandria, where he found the cobbler. The cobbler was astonished to see so reverend a father to come into his house. Then Anthony said unto him, 'Come and tell me thy whole conversation, and how thou spendest thy time.' 'Sir,' said the cobbler, 'as for me, good works I have none, for my life is but simple and slender ; I am but a poor cobbler. In the morning, when I arise, I pray for the whole city wherein I dwell, specially for all such neighbours and poor friends as I have. After, I set me at my labour, where I spend the whole day in getting of my living, and keep me from all falsehood ; for I hate nothing so much as I do deceitfulness : wherefore, when I make to any man a promise, I keep it and do it truly ; and so spend my time poorly with my wife and children, whom I teach and instruct as far as my wit will serve me, to fear and dread God. This is the sum of my simple life.'

"In this story you see how God loveth those that follow their vocation, and live uprightly without any falsehood in their dealing. This Anthony was a great and holy man, yet this cobbler was as much esteemed before God as he."

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

"I read once a story of a good bishop, which rode by the way and was weary, being yet far off from any town ; therefore seeing a fair house, he went thither, and was very well and honourably received : there were great preparations made for him, and a great banquet ; all things were in plenty. Then the man of the house set out his prosperity, and told the bishop what riches he had, in what honours and dignities he was,

how many fair children he had, what a virtuous wife God had provided for him, so that he had no lack of any manner of thing, he had no trouble nor vexations, neither outward nor inward. Now this holy man, hearing the good estate of that man, called one of his servants, and commanded him to make ready the horses : for the bishop thought that God was not in that house, because there was no temptation there : he took his leave and went his ways. Now when he came a two or three mile off, he remembered his book which he had left behind him ; he sent his man back again to fetch that book, and when the servant came again the house was sunken and all that was in it. Here it appeareth that it is a good thing to have temptation. This man thought himself a jolly fellow, because all things went well with him. But he knew not St. James's lesson : *Beatus qui suffert tentationem*, 'Blessed is he that endureth temptation.' Let us therefore learn here, not to be irksome when God layeth his cross upon us."

Let us take a long leap of about a century, and we come to *Jeremy Taylor*, another bishop, whom I mention immediately after *Latimer* because he is apparently such a contrast to that homely divine, while yet in very truth he has a measure of likeness to him as to the point now in hand. They both rejoiced in figure and metaphor, and equally delighted in incident and narrative. True, the one would talk of John and William, and the other of *Anexagoras* and *Scipio* ; but actual scenes were the delight of each. In this respect *Jeremy Taylor* may be said to be *Latimer* turned into Latin. *Jeremy Taylor* is as full of classical allusions as a king's palace is full of rare treasures, and his language is of the lofty order which more becomes a patrician audience than a popular assembly ; but when you come to the essence of things, you see that if *Latimer* is homely, so also *Taylor* narrates incidents which are *homely to him* ; but his home is among philosophers of Greece and senators of Rome. This being understood, we venture to say that no one used more anecdotes than this splendid poet-preacher. His biographer truly says,—“It would be hard to point out a branch of learning or of scientific pursuit to which he does not occasionally allude ; or any author of eminence, either ancient or modern, with whom he does not evince himself acquainted. He more than once refers to obscure stories in ancient writers, as if they were of necessity as familiar to all his readers as to himself ; as for instance, he talks of ‘poor *Attilius Aviola*,’ and again of ‘the Libyan lion that brake loose into his wilderness and killed two Roman boys.’” In all this he is eminently select and classical, and therefore I the more freely introduce him here ; for there can be no reason why our anecdotes should all be rustic ; we, too, may rifle the treasures of antiquity, and make the heathen contribute to

the gospel, even as Hiram of Tyre served under Solomon's direction for the building of the temple of the Lord.

I am no admirer of Taylor's style in other respects, and his teaching seems to be at times semi-popish; but in this place I have only to deal with him upon one particular, and of that matter he is an admirable example. He lavishes classic stories even as an Asiatic queen bedecks herself with countless pearls. Out of a single sermon I extract the following, which may suffice for our purpose:—

STUDENTS PROGRESSING BACKWARDS.

"Menedemus was wont to say, 'that the young boys that went to Athens, the first year were wise men, the second year philosophers, the third orators, and the fourth were but plebeians, and understood nothing but their own ignorance.' And just so it happens to some in the progresses of religion; at first they are violent and active, and then they satiate all the appetites of religion; and that which is left is, that they were soon weary, and sat down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the business of pride or money; and, by this time, they understand that their religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth to the coldness and infirmities of old age."

THE PROUD MAN WHO BOASTED OF HIS HUMILITY.

"He was noted for a vain person, who, being overjoyed for the cure (as he thought) of his pride, cried out to his wife, '*Cerne, Dionysia, deposui fastum*;' 'Behold, I have laid aside all my pride.'"

DIOGENES AND THE YOUNG MAN.

"Diogenes once spied a young man coming out of a tavern or place of entertainment, who, perceiving himself observed by the philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might, if possible, preserve his fame with that severe person. But Diogenes told him, *Quanto magis intraveris, tanto magis eris in caupona*: 'The more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen.' He that conceals his sin still retains that which he counts his shame and burden."

No examples will have greater weight with you than those taken from among the Puritans, in whose steps it is our desire to walk, though, alas! we follow with feeble feet. Certain of them abounded in anecdotes and stories: *Thomas Brooks* is a signal instance of the wise and wealthy use of holy fancy. I put him first, because I reckon him to be the first in the special art which is now under consideration. He hath dust of gold; for even in the margins of his books there are sentences of exceeding preciousness, and hints at classic stories. His style is clear and full; he never so exceeds in illustration as to lose sight of his doctrine.

His floods of metaphor never drown his meaning, but float it upon their surface. If you have never read his works I almost envy you the joy of entering for the first time upon his "Unsearchable Riches," trying his "Precious Remedies," tasting his "Apples of Gold," communing with his "Mute Christian," and enjoying his other masterly writings. Let me give you a taste of his quality in the way of anecdotes. Here are a few brief ones which lie almost upon the same page; but he so abounds with them that you may readily cull scores of better ones for yourselves.

MR. WELCH WEeping.

"A soul under special manifestations of love weeps that it can love Christ no more. Mr. Welch, a Suffolk minister, weeping at table, and being asked the reason of it, answered, it was because he could love Christ no more. The true lovers of Christ can never rise high enough in their love to Christ; they count a little love to be no love; great love to be but little; strong love to be but weak; and the highest love to be infinitely below the worth of Christ, the beauty and glory of Christ, the fulness, sweetness, and goodness of Christ. The top of their misery in this life is, that they love so little, though they are so much beloved."

SUBMISSIVE SILENCE.

"Such was the silence of Philip the Second, king of Spain, that when his invincible Armada, that had been three years a-fitting, was lost, he gave command that all over Spain they should give thanks to God and the saints that it was no more grievous."

FAVOURITES SUBMITTING TO THEIR LORDS.

"When Tiribazus, a noble Persian, was arrested, at first he drew his sword and defended himself; but when they charged him in the king's name, and informed him that they came from the king, and were commanded to bring him to the king, he yielded willingly. Seneca persuaded his friend to bear his affliction quietly, because he was the emperor's favourite, telling him that it was not lawful for him to complain whilst Cæsar was his friend. So saith the holy Christian, Oh, my soul! be quiet, be still; all is in love, all is a fruit of Divine favour."

SIR PHILIP SYDNEY.

"A religious commander being shot in battle, when the wound was searched and the bullet cut out, some standing by, pitying his pain, he replied, 'Though I groan, yet I bless God I do not grumble. God allows his people to groan, though not to grumble.'"

Thomas Adams, the Conforming Puritan, whose sermons are full of rugged force and profound meaning, never hesitated to insert a story when he felt that it would enforce his teaching. His starting-point is ever some Biblical sentence, or scriptural history; and this he works out with much elaboration, bringing to it all the

treasures of his mind. As Stowell says, "Fables, anecdotes, classical poetry, gems from the fathers and other old writers, are scattered over almost every page." His anecdotes are usually rough-and-ready ones, and might be compared to those of Latimer, only they are not so genial; their humour is generally grim and caustic. The following may serve as fair specimens:—

THE HUSBAND AND HIS WITTY WIFE.

"The husband told his wife, that he had one ill quality, he was given to be angry without cause; she wittily replied, that she would keep him from that fault, for she would give him cause enough. It is the folly of some that they will be offended without cause, to whom the world promises that they shall have causes enough. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation.'"

THE SERVANT AT THE SERMON.

"It is ordinary with many to commend the lecture to others' ears, but few commend it to their own hearts. It is morally true what the Christian Tell-truth relates: A servant coming from church, praiseth the sermon to his master. He asks him what was the text. Nay, quoth the servant, it was begun before I came in. What then was his conclusion? He answered, I came out before it was done. But what said he in the midst? Indeed I was asleep in the midst. Many crowd to get into the church, but make no room for the sermon to get into them."

THE PICTURE OF A HORSE.

"One charged a painter to draw him *equum volitantem*, a trotting or prancing horse; and he (mistaking the word) drew him *equum volutantem*, a wallowing or tumbling horse, with his heels upward. Being brought home, and the bespeaker blaming his error; I would have him prancing, and you have made him tumbling. If that be all, quoth the painter, it is but turning the picture wrong side uppermost, and you have your desire. Thus in their quodlibetical discourses they can but turn the lineaments, and the matter is as they would have it. I speak not this to disgrace all their learning, but their fruitless, needless disputes and arguments, who find themselves a tongue, where the Scripture allows them none."

THE PIRATE.

"As when the desperate pirate, ransacking and rifling a bottom, was told by the master, that though no law could touch him for the present, he should answer it at the day of judgment; replied, Nay, if I may stay so long ere I come to it, I will take thee and thy vessel too. A conceit wherewith too many land-thieves, oppressors, flatter themselves in their hearts, though they dare not utter it with their lips."

William Gurnall, the author of "The Christian in Complete Armour," must surely have been a relater of pertinent stories in his sermons, since even in his set and solid writings they occur.

Perhaps I need not have made the distinction between his writings and his preaching, for it appears from the preface that his "Christian in Complete Armour" was preached before it was printed. In vivid imagery every page of his famous book abounds, and whenever this is the case we are sure to light upon short narratives and striking incidents. He is as profuse in illustration as either Brooks, Watson, or Swinnoek. Happy Lavenham to have been served by such a pastor! By the way, this "Complete Armour" is beyond all others a preacher's book: I should think that more discourses have been suggested by it than by any other uninspired volume. I have often resorted to it when my own fire has been burning low, and I have seldom failed to find a glowing coal upon Gurnall's hearth. John Newton said that if he might read only one book beside the Bible, he would choose "The Christian in Complete Armour," and Cecil was of much the same opinion. J. C. Ryle has said of it, "You will often find in a line and a half some great truth, put so concisely, and yet so fully, that you really marvel how so much thought could be got into so few words." One or two stories from the early part of his great work must suffice for our purpose.

BIRD SAFE IN A MAN'S BOSOM.

"A heathen could say, when a bird (feared by a hawk) flew into his bosom, 'I will not betray thee unto thine enemy, seeing thou comest for sanctuary unto me.' How much less will God yield up a soul unto its enemy, when it takes sanctuary in his Name, saying, 'Lord, I am hunted with such a temptation, dogged with such a lust; either thou must pardon it, or I am damned; mortify it, or I shall be a slave to it; take me into the bosom of thy love for Christ's sake; castle me in the arms of thy everlasting strength; it is in thy power to save me from, or give me up into, the hands of my enemy: I have no confidence in myself or any other; into thy hands I commit my cause, my life, and rely on thee.' This dependence of a soul undoubtedly will awaken the almighty power of God for such a one's defence: he hath sworn the greatest oath that can come out of his blessed lips, even by himself, that such as 'flee for refuge' to hope in him shall have 'strong consolation': Hebrews vi. 17, 18."

THE PRINCE WITH HIS FAMILY IN DANGER.

"Suppose a king's son should get out of a besieged city, where he hath left his wife and children (whom he loves as his own soul), and these all ready to die by sword or famine, if supply come not the sooner; could this prince, when arrived at his father's house, please himself with the delights of the court, and forget the distress of his family? or rather would he not come post to his father (having their cries and groans always in his ears), and, before he ate or drank, do his errand to his father, and entreat him, if ever he loved him, that he would send all the

force of his kingdom to raise the siege, rather than any of his dear relations should perish? Surely, sirs, though Christ be in the top of his preferment, and out of the storm in regard of his own person, yet his children, left behind in the midst of sin's, Satan's, and the world's batteries, are in his heart, and shall not be forgotten a moment by him. The care he takes in our business appeared in the speedy despatch he made of his Spirit to his apostles' supply, which, as soon almost as he was warm in his seat at his Father's right hand, he sent, to the incomparable comfort of his apostles and us that to this day, yea, to the end of the world, do or shall believe on him."

JOHN CARELESS.

"When God honours a person to suffer for his truth, this is a great privilege: 'Unto you it is given not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake.' God doth not use to give worthless gifts to his saints, there is some preciousness in it which a carnal eye cannot see. Faith, you will say, is a great gift; but perseverance greater, without which faith would be little worth, and perseverance in suffering is above both honourable. This made *John Careless*, an English martyr (who though he died not at the stake, yet in prison for Christ), say, 'Such an honour 'tis as angels are not permitted to have; therefore, God forgive me mine unthankfulness.'"

MR. BENBRIDGE.

"Oh, how many die at the gallows as martyrs in the devil's cause for felonies, rapes, and murders! He might withdraw his grace, and leave thee to thy own cowardice and unbelief, and then thou wouldest soon show thyself in thy colours. The stoutest champions for Christ have been taught how weak they are if Christ steps aside. Some that have given great testimony of their faith and resolution in Christ's cause, even to come so near dying for his name as to give themselves to be bound to the stake, and fire to be kindled upon them, yet their hearts have failed; as that holy man, Mr. Benbridge, in our English martyrology, who thrust the faggots from him, and cried out, '*I recant, I recant!*' Yet this man, when reinforced in his faith, and indued with power from above, was able within the space of a week after that sad foil, to die at the stake cheerfully. He that once overcame death for us, 'tis he that always overcame death in us."

John Flavel is a name which I shall have to quote in another lecture, for he is greatest in metaphor and allegory; but in the matter of anecdote his preaching is a fine example. It was said of his ministry that he who was unaffected by it must either have had a very soft head or a very hard heart. He had a fund of striking incidents, and a faculty of happy illustration, and as he was a man in whose manner cheerfulness was blended with solemnity, he was popular in the highest degree both at home and abroad. He sought out words which might suit the sailors of Dartmouth and farmers of Devon, and therefore he has left behind him

his "Navigation Spiritualized," and his "Husbandry Spiritualized," a legacy for each of the two orders of men who plough the sea and the land. He was a man worth making a pilgrimage to hear. What a crime it was to silence his heaven-touched lips by the abominable Act of Uniformity! Instead of quoting several passages from his sermons, each one containing an anecdote, I have thought it as well to give a mass of stories as we find them in his prelections upon—

PROVIDENCE IN CONVERSION.

"A scrap of paper accidentally coming to view hath been used as an occasion of conversion. This was the case of a minister of Wales, who had two livings, but took little care of either. He being at a fair, bought something at a pedlar's standing, and rent off a leaf of Mr. Perkins' catechism to wrap it in; and reading a line or two of it, God sent it home so as it did the work."

"The marriage of a godly man into a carnal family hath been ordered by Providence for the conversion and salvation of many therein. Thus we read, in the life of that renowned English worthy, Mr. John Bruen, that, in his second match, it was agreed that he should have one year's diet in his mother-in-law's house. During his abode there that year (saith Mr. Clark) the Lord was pleased by his means graciously to work upon her soul, as also upon his wife's sister, and half-sister, their brothers, Mr. William and Mr. Thomas Fox, with one or two of the servants in that family."

"Not only the reading of a book, or hearing of a minister, but (which is most remarkable) the very mistake or forgetfulness of a minister hath been improved by Providence for this end and purpose. Augustine, once preaching to his congregation, forgot the argument which he first proposed, and fell upon the errors of the Manichees, beside his first intention; by which discourse he converted one Firmus, his auditor, who fell down at his feet weeping, and confessing he had lived a Manichee many years. Another I knew, who, going to preach, took up another Bible than that he had designed, in which, not only missing his notes, but the chapter also in which his text lay, was put to some loss thereby; but after a short pause he resolved to speak to any other Scripture that might be presented to him, and accordingly read the text, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise' (2 Pet. iii. 9); and though he had nothing prepared, yet the Lord helped him to speak both methodically and pertinently from it; by which discourse a gracious change was wrought upon one in the congregation, who hath since given good evidence of a sound conversion, and acknowledged this sermon to be the first and only means thereof."

"Going to hear a sermon in *jest* hath proved some men's conversion in *earnest*. Mr. Firmin, in his 'Real Christian,' tells us of a notorious drunkard, whom the drunkards called 'Father,' that one day would needs go to hear what Wilson said, out of no other design, it seems, but to scoff at the holy man; but in the prayer before sermon, his heart began to thaw, and when he read his text, which was, 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee' (John v. 14), he could not

contain ; and in that sermon the Lord changed his heart, though formerly so bitter an enemy that the minister on lecture-days was afraid to go to church before his shop door. 'Lo, these are parts of his ways ; but how little a portion is heard of him ?'

George Swinnoek, for some years chaplain to Hampden, had the gift of illustration largely developed, as his works prove. Some of his similes are far-fetched, and the growth of knowledge has rendered certain of them obsolete ; but they served his purpose, and made his teaching attractive. After deducting all his fancies, which in the present age would be judged to be strained, there remains "a rare amount of sanctified wit and wisdom" ; and sparkling here and there we spy out a few telling stories, mostly of classic origin.

THE PRAYER OF PAULINUS.

"It was the speech of Paulinus, when his city was taken by the barbarians, *Domine, ne excrucier ob aurum et argentum* : 'Lord, let me not be troubled for my silver and gold which I have lost, for thou art all things.' As Noah, when the whole world was overwhelmed with water, had a fair epitome of it in the ark, having all sorts of beasts and fowls there ; so he that in a deluge hath God to be his God, hath the original of all mercies. He who enjoyeth the ocean may rejoice, though some drops are taken from him."

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE MILKMAID.

"Queen Elizabeth envied the milkmaid when she was in prison ; but had she known the glorious reign which she was to have for forty-four years, she would not have repined at the poor happiness of so mean a person. Christians are too prone to envy the husks which wandering sinners fill themselves with here below ; but would they set before them their glorious hopes of a heaven, how they must reign with Christ for ever and ever, they would see little reason for their repining."

THE BELIEVING CHILD.

"I have read a story of a little child about eight or nine years old, that being extremely pinched with hunger, looked one day pitifully necessitous on her mother, and said, 'Mother, do you think that God will starve us ?' The mother answered, 'No, child, he will not.' The child replied, 'But if he do, yet we must love him and serve him.' Here was language that spake a well-grown Christian. For indeed God brings us to want and misery, to try us whether we love him for his own sake, or for our own sakes ; for those excellencies that are in him, or for those mercies we have from him ; to see whether we will say with the cynic to Antisthenes, *Nullus tam durus erit baculus*, etc. 'There should be no cudgel so crabbed as to beat me from thee.'"

FASHIONABLE RELIGION.

"I have read of a popish lady in Paris, that when she saw a glorious procession to one of their saints, cried out, 'Oh, how fine is our religion

beyond that of the Huguenots!—they have a mean and beggarly religion, but ours is full of bravery and solemnity.’ But as heralds say of a coat of arms, if it be full of gays and devices, it speaks a mean descent; so truly that manner of worship which is mingled with men’s inventions speaks its descent to be mean—namely, from man.”

THE BUSY DUKE.

“The French Duc d’Alva could say, when he was asked by Henry the Fourth whether he had seen the eclipse of the sun, that he had so much business to do upon earth, that he had no time to look up to heaven. Sure I am, the Christian may say with more truth and conscience, that he hath so much business to do for heaven, that he hath no time to mind vain or earthly things.”

Thomas Watson was one of the many Puritan preachers who won the popular ear by their frequent illustrations. In the clear flowing stream of his teaching we find pearls of anecdote very frequently. No one ever grew weary under such pleasant yet weighty discourse as that which we find in his “Beatitudes.” Let two quotations serve to show his skill.

THE VESTAL AND THE BRACELETS.

“Most men think because God hath blessed them with an estate, therefore they are blessed. Alas! God often gives these things in anger. He loads his enemies with gold and silver; as Plutarch reports of Tarpeia, a Vestal nun, who bargained with the enemy to betray the Capitol of Rome to them, in case she might have the golden bracelets on their left hands, which they promised; and being entered into the Capitol, they threw not only their bracelets, but their bucklers, too, upon her, through the weight whereof she was pressed to death. God often lets men have the golden bracelets of worldly substance, the weight whereof sinks them into hell. Oh, let us *superna anhelare*, get our eyes ‘fixed’ and our hearts ‘united’ to God the supreme good; this is to pursue blessedness as in a chase.”

HEDGEHOG AND CONIES.

“The Fabulist tells a story of the hedgehog that came to the cony-burrows in stormy weather, and desired harbour, promising that he would be a quiet guest; but when once he had gotten entertainment, he did set up his prickles, and did never leave till he had thrust the poor conies out of their burrows: so covetousness, though it hath many fair pleas to insinuate and wind itself into the heart, yet as soon as you have let it in, this thorn will never cease pricking till it hath choked all good beginnings, and thrust all religion out of your hearts.”

I think this must suffice to represent the men of the Puritanic period, who added to their profound theology and varied learning a zeal to be understood, and a skill in setting forth truth by the help of every-day occurrences. The age which followed them was

barren of spiritual life, and was afflicted by a race of rhetorical divines, whose words had little connection with the *Word* of life. The scanty thought of the Queen Anne dignitaries needed no aid of metaphor or parable: there was nothing to explain to the people; the utmost endeavour of these divines was to hide the nakedness of their discourses with the fig-leaves of Latinized verbiage. Living preaching was gone, spiritual life was gone, and consequently a pulpit was set up which had no voice for the common people; no voice, indeed, for anybody except the mere formalist, who is content if decorum be observed and respectability maintained. Of course, our notion of making truth clear by stories did not suit the dignified death of the period, and it was only when the dry bones began to be stirred that the popular method was again brought to the front.

The illustrious *George Whitefield* stands, with Wesley, at the head of that noble army who led the Revival of the last century. It is not at this present any part of my plan to speak of his matchless eloquence, unquenchable earnestness, and incessant labour; but it is quite according to the run of my lecture to remind you of his own saying,—“I use market language.” He employed pure, good, flowing English; but he was as simple as if he spoke to children. Although by no means abounding in illustration, yet he always employed it when needed, and he narrated incidents with great power of action and emphasis. His stories were so told that they thrilled the people: they saw as well as heard, for each word had its proper gesture. One reason why he could be understood at so great a distance was the fact that the eye helped the ear. As specimens of his anecdotes I have selected these which follow:—

THE TWO CHAPLAINS.

“You cannot do without the grace of God when you come to die. There was a nobleman that kept a deistical chaplain, and his lady a Christian one; when he was dying, he says to his chaplain,—‘I liked you very well when I was in health; but it is my lady’s chaplain I must have when I am sick.’”

NEVER SATISFIED.

“My dear hearers, there is not a single soul of you all that are satisfied in your stations: is not the language of your hearts when apprentices, We think we shall do very well when journeymen; when journeymen, that we should do very well when masters; when single, that we shall do well when married; and to be sure you think you shall do well when you keep a carriage. I have heard of one who began low: he first wanted a house; then, says he, ‘I want two, then four, then six’; and

when he had them, he said, 'I think I want nothing else.' 'Yes,' says his friend, 'you will soon want another thing, that is, a hearse-and-six to carry you to your grave'; and that made him tremble."

DR. MANTON'S HEART.

"A good woman, who was charmed with Dr. Manton, said, 'Oh, sir, you have made an excellent sermon to-day; I wish I had your heart.' 'Do you so?' said he, 'good woman; you had better not wish for it; for if you had it, you would wish for your own again.' The best of men see themselves in the worst light."

Fearing that the quotation of any more examples might prove tedious, I would only remind you that such men as Berridge, Rowland Hill, Matthew Wilks, Christmas Evans, William Jay, and others who have but lately departed from us, owed much of their attractiveness to the way in which they aroused their audiences, and flashed truth into their faces by well-chosen anecdotes. Time calls upon me to have done, and how can I come to a better close than by mentioning one living man, who, above all others, has in two continents stirred the masses of the people?—I refer to D. L. Moody. This admirable brother has a great aversion to the printing of his sermons; and well he may have, for he is incessantly preaching, and has no time allowed him for the preparation of fresh discourses; and therefore it would be great unwisdom on his part to print at once those addresses with which he is working through a campaign. We hope, however, that when he has done with a sermon he will never suffer it to die out, but give it to the church and to the world through the press. Our esteemed brother has a lively, telling style, and he thinks it wise frequently to fasten a nail with the hammer of anecdote. Here are four or five extracts from the little book entitled "Arrows and Anecdotes, by D. L. Moody. By John Lobb":—

THE IDIOT'S MOTHER.

"I know a mother who has an idiot child. For it she gave up all society, almost everything, and devoted her whole life to it. 'And now,' said she, 'for fourteen years I have tended it and loved it, and it does not even know me. Oh! it is breaking my heart!' Oh! how the Lord must say this of hundreds here! Jesus comes here, and goes from seat to seat, asking if there is a place for him. Oh! will not some of you take him into your hearts?"

SURGEON AND PATIENT.

"When I was in Belfast I knew a doctor who had a friend a leading surgeon there, and he told me that the surgeon's custom was, before performing any operation, to say to the patient: 'Take a good look at the wound, and then fix your eyes on me, and don't take them off till I

get through the operation.' I thought at the time that was a good illustration. Sinner, take a good look at the wound to-night, and then fix your eyes on Christ, and don't take them off. It is better to look at the remedy than at the wound."

THE ORPHAN'S PRAYER.

"A little child, whose father and mother had died, was taken into another family. The first night she asked if she could pray as she used to do. They said, 'Oh, yes.' So she knelt down, and prayed as her mother had taught her; and, when that was ended, she added a little prayer of her own: 'Oh, God, make these people as kind to me as father and mother were.' Then she paused, and looked up, as if expecting the answer, and added: 'Of course he will.' How sweetly simple was that little one's faith! She expected God to 'do,' and, of course, she got her request."

THE ROLL-CALL.

"A soldier lay on his dying couch during our last war, and they heard him say, 'Here!' They asked him what he wanted, and he put up his hand and said: 'Hush! they are calling the roll of heaven, and I am answering to my name'; and presently he whispered: 'Here!' and he was gone."

NO HOME BEYOND THE GRAVE.

"I have been told of a wealthy man who died recently. Death came unexpectedly to him, as it almost always does; and he sent out for his lawyer to draw his will. And he went on willing away his property; and when he came to his wife and child, he said he wanted them to have the home. But the little child didn't understand what death was. She was standing near, and she said, 'Papa, have you got a home in that land you are going to?' The arrow reached that heart; but it was too late. He saw his mistake. He had got no home beyond the grave."

I will weary you no longer. You may safely do what the most useful of men have done before you. Copy them not only in their use of illustration, but in their wisely keeping it in subservience to their design. They were not story-tellers, but preachers of the gospel; they did not aim at the entertainment of the people, but at their conversion. Never did they go out of their way to drag in a telling bit which they had been saving up for display, and never could anyone say of their illustrations that they were

"Windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing."

Keep you the due proportion of things lest I do worse than lose my labour, by becoming the cause of your presenting to the people strings of anecdotes instead of sound doctrines, for that would be as evil a thing as if you offered to hungry men flowers instead of bread, and gave to the naked gauze of gossamer instead of woollen cloth.

LECTURE III.

The Uses of Anecdotes and Illustrations.

THE uses of anecdotes and illustrations are manifold; but we may reduce them to seven, so far as our present purposes are concerned, not for a moment imagining that this will be a complete list.

We use them, first, *to interest the mind and secure the attention of our hearers.* We cannot endure a sleepy audience. To us, a slumbering man is no man. Sydney Smith observed that, although Eve was taken out of the side of Adam while he was asleep, it was not possible to remove sin from men's hearts in that manner. We do not agree with Hodge, the hedger and ditcher, who remarked to a Christian man with whom he was talking, "I loikes Sunday, I does; I loikes Sunday." "And what makes you like Sunday?" "'Cause, you see, it's a day of rest; I goes down to the old church, I gets into a pew, and puts my legs up, and I thinks o' nothin'." It is to be feared that in town as well as in country this thinking of nothing is a very usual thing. But your regard for the sacred day, and the ministry to which you are called, and the worshipping assembly, will not allow you to give your people the chance of thinking of nothing. You want to arouse every faculty in them to receive the Word of God, that it may be a blessing to them.

We want to win attention at the commencement of the service, and to hold it till the close. With this aim, many methods may be tried; but possibly none will succeed better than the introduction of an interesting story. This sets Hodge listening, and although he will miss the fresh air of the fields, and begin to feel drowsy in your stuffy chapel, another tale will stir him to renewed attention. If he hears some narrative in connection with his village or county, you will have him "all there", and you may then hope to do him good.

The anecdote in the sermon answers the purpose of an engraving

in a book. Everybody knows that people are attracted by volumes with pictures in them; and that, when a child gets a book, although it may pass over the letterpress without observation, it is quite sure to pause over the woodcuts. Let us not be too great to use a method which many have found successful. We must have attention. In some audiences, we cannot get it if we begin with solid instruction; they are not desirous of being taught, and consequently they are not in a condition to receive the truth if we set it before them nakedly. Now for a bunch of flowers to attract these people to our table, for afterwards we can feed them with the food they so much need. Just as the Salvation Army goes trumpeting and drumming through the streets to draw the people into the barracks, so may an earnest man spend the first few minutes with an unprepared congregation in waking the folks up, and enticing them to enter the inner chamber of the truth. Even this awakening prelude must have in it that which is worthy of the occasion; but if it is not up to your usual average in weight of doctrine, it may not only be excused, but commended, if it prepares the audience to receive that which is to follow. Ground-bait may catch no fish; but it answers its purpose if it brings them near the bait and the hook.

A congregation which has been well instructed, and is mainly made up of established believers, will not need to be addressed in the same style as an audience gathered fresh from the world, or a meeting of dull, formal churchgoers. Your common-sense will teach you to suit your manner to your audience. It is possible to maintain profound and long-continued attention without the use of an illustration; I have frequently done so in the Tabernacle when it has been mainly filled with church-members; but when my own people are away, and strangers fill their places, I bring out all my store of stories, similes, and parables.

I have sometimes told anecdotes in the pulpit, and very delicate and particular people have expressed their regret and horror that I should say such things; but when I have found that God has blessed some of the illustrations I have used, I have often thought of the story of the man with a halbert, who was attacked by a nobleman's dog, and, of course, in defending himself, he killed the animal. The nobleman was very angry, and asked the man how he dared to kill the dog; and the man replied that, if he had not killed it, the dog would have bitten him, and torn him in pieces. "Well," said the nobleman, "but you should not have struck it on the head with the halbert; why did you not hit it with the

handle?" "My lord," answered the man, "so I would if it had tried to bite me with its tail." So, when I have to deal with sin, some people say, "Why don't you address it delicately? Why don't you speak to it in courtly language?" And I answer, "So I would if it would bite me with its tail; but as long as ever I find that it deals roughly with me, I will deal roughly with it; and any kind of weapon that will help to slay the monster, I shall not find unfitted to my hand."

We cannot afford, in these days, to lose any opportunity of getting hold of the public ear. We must use every occasion that comes in our way, and every tool that is likely to help us in our work; and we must rouse up all our faculties, and put forth all our energies, if that by any means we may get the people to heed that which they are so slow to regard, the great story of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. We shall need to read much, and to study hard, or else we shall not be able to influence our day and generation for good. I believe that the greatest industry is necessary to make a thoroughly efficient preacher, and the best natural ability, too; and it is my firm conviction that, when you have the best natural ability, you must supplement it with the greatest imaginable industry if you are really to do much service for God among this crooked and perverse generation.

The fool in Scotland, who got into the pulpit before the preacher arrived, was requested by the minister to come down. "Nay, nay," answered the man, "you come up, too, for it will take both of us to move this stiff-necked generation." It will certainly take all the wisdom that we can obtain to move the people among whom our lot is cast; and if we do not use every lawful means of interesting the minds of our hearers, we shall find that they will be like a certain other congregation, in which the people were all asleep except one poor idiot. The minister woke them up, and tried to reprove them by saying, "There, you were all asleep except poor Jock the idiot;" but his rebuke was cut short by Jock, who exclaimed, "And if I had not been an idiot, I should have been asleep, too."

I will leave the moral of that well-known story to speak for itself, and will pass on to my second point, which is, that the use of anecdotes and illustrations *renders our preaching life-like and vivid*. This is a most important matter. Of all things that we have to avoid, one of the most essential is that of giving our people the idea, when we are preaching, that we are acting a part. Everything theatrical in the

pulpit, either in tone, manner, or anything else, I loathe from my very soul. Just go into the pulpit, and talk to the people as you would in the kitchen, or the drawing-room, and say what you have to tell them in your ordinary tone of voice. Let me conjure you, by everything that is good, to throw away all stilted styles of speech, and anything approaching affectation. Nothing can succeed with the masses except naturalness and simplicity. Why, some ministers cannot even give out a hymn in a natural manner! "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God," [spoken in the tone that is sometimes heard in churches or chapels]—who would ever think of speaking like that at the tea-table? "I shall be greatly obliged if you will kindly give me another cup of tea," [spoken in the same unnatural way]—you would never think of giving any tea to a man who talked like that; and if we preach in that stupid style, the people will not believe what we say; they will think it is our business, our occupation, and that we are doing the whole thing in a professional manner. We must shake off professionalism of every kind, as Paul shook off the viper into the fire; and we must speak as God has ordained that we should speak, and not by any strange, out-of-the-way, new-fangled method of pulpit oratory.

Our Lord's teaching was amazingly life-like and vivid; it was the setting out of truth before the eye, not as a flat picture, but as in a stereoscope, making it stand up, with all its lines and angles of beauty in life-like reality. That was a fine living sermon when he took a little child, and set him in the midst of the disciples; and that was another powerful discourse when he preached about abstaining from carking cares, and stooped down, and plucked a lily (as I suppose he did) and said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin." I can readily suppose that some ravens were flying just over his head, and that he pointed to them, and said, "Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them." There was a life-likeness, you see, a vividness, about the whole thing. We cannot always literally imitate our Lord, as we have mostly to preach in places of worship. It is a blessing that we have so many houses of prayer, and I thank God that there are so many of them springing up all around us; yet I should praise the Lord still more if half the ministers, who preach in our various buildings, were made to turn out of them, and to speak for their Master in the highways, and byways, and anywhere that the people would go to listen to them. We are to go out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, not to stop

in our chapels waiting for every creature to come in to hear what we have to say. A sportsman, who should sit at his parlour window, with his gun loaded all ready for shooting partridges, would probably not make up a very heavy bag of game. No, he must put on his buskins, and tramp off over the fields, and then he will get a shot at the birds he is seeking. So must we do, brethren, we must always have our buskins ready for field work, and be ever on the watch for opportunities of going out among the souls of men, that we may bring them back as trophies of the power of the gospel we have to proclaim.

It might not be wise for us to try to make our sermons life-like and vivid in the style in which quaint old Matthew Wilks sometimes did; as when, one Sabbath morning, he took into the pulpit a little box, and after a while opened it, and displayed to the congregation a small pair of scales, and then, turning over the leaves of the Bible with great deliberation, held up the balances, and announced as his text, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." I think, however, that was puerile rather than powerful. I like Matthew Wilks better when, on another occasion, his text being, "See that ye walk circumspectly," he commenced by saying, "Did you ever see a tom cat walking on the top of a high wall that was covered with bits of broken glass bottles? If so, you had just then an accurate illustration of what is meant by the injunction, 'See that ye walk circumspectly.'" There is the case, too, of good "Father Taylor", who, preaching in the streets in one of the towns of California, stood on the top of a whisky-barrel. By way of illustration, he stamped his foot on the cask, and said, "This barrel is like man's heart, full of evil stuff; and there are some people who say that, if sin is within you, it may just as well come out." "No," said the speaker, "it is not so; now here is this whisky that is in the barrel under my foot; it is a bad thing, it is a damnable thing, it is a devilish thing, but as long as it is kept tightly bunged up in the barrel, it certainly will not do the hurt that it will if it is taken over to the liquor-bar, and sold out to the drunkards of the neighbourhood, sending them home to beat their wives, or kill their children. So, if you keep your sins in your own heart, they will be evil and devilish, and God will damn you for them; but they will not do so much hurt to other people, at any rate, as if they are seen in public." Stamping his foot again on the barrel, the preacher said, "Suppose you try to pass this cask over the boundaries of the country, and the custom-house officer comes, and demands the duty upon its contents.

You say that you will not let any of the whisky get out ; but the officer tells you that he cannot allow it to pass. So, if it were possible for us to abstain from outward sin, yet, since the heart is full of all manner of evil, it would be impossible for us to pass the frontiers of heaven, and to be found in that holy and happy place." That I thought to be somewhat of a life-like illustration, and a capital way of teaching truth, although I should not like always to have a whisky-barrel for a pulpit, for fear the head might fall in, and I might fall in, too.

I should not recommend any of you to be so life-like in your ministry as that notable French priest, who, addressing his congregation, said, "As to the Magdalenes, and those who commit the sins of the flesh, such persons are very common ; they abound even in this church ; and I am going to throw this mass-book at a woman who is a Magdalene," whereupon all the women in the place bent down their heads. So the priest said, "No, surely, you are not all Magdalenes ; I hardly thought that was the case ; but you see how your sin finds you out !" Nor should I even recommend you to follow the example of the clergyman, who, when a collection was to be made for lighting and warming the church, after he had preached some time, blew out the candles on both sides of the pulpit, saying that the collection was for the lights and the fires, and he did not require any light, for he did not read his sermon, "but," he added, "when Roger gives out the Psalm presently, you will want a light to see your books ; so the candles are for yourselves. And as for the stove, I do not need its heat, for my exercise in preaching is sufficient to keep me warm ; therefore you see that the collection is wholly for yourselves on this occasion. Nobody can say that the clergy are collecting for themselves this time, for on this Sunday it is wholly for your own selves." I thought the man was a fool for making such remarks, though I find that his conduct has been referred to as being a very excellent instance of boldness in preaching.

There is a story told about myself, which, like very many of the tales told about me, is a *story* in two senses. It is said that, in order to show the way in which men backslide, I once slid down the banisters of the pulpit. I only mention this, in passing, because it is a remarkable fact that, at the time the story was told, my pulpit was fixed in the wall, and there was no banister, so that the reverend fool (which he would have been if he had done what people said) could not have performed the antic if he had been inclined to attempt it. But

the anecdote, although it is not true, serves all the purposes of the life-likeness I have tried to describe.

You probably recollect the instance of Whitefield depicting the blind man, with his dog, walking on the brink of a precipice, and his foot almost slipping over the edge. The preacher's description was so graphic, and the illustration so vivid and life-like, that Lord Chesterfield sprang up, and exclaimed, "Good God! he's gone!" but Whitefield answered, "No, my lord, he is not quite gone; let us hope that he may yet be saved." Then he went on to speak of the blind man as being led by his reason, which is only like a dog, showing that a man led only by reason is ready to fall into hell. How vividly one would see the love of money set forth in the story told by our venerable friend, Mr. Rogers, of a man who, when he lay a-dying, would put his money in his mouth because he loved it so, and wanted to take some of it with him! How strikingly is the non-utility of worldly wealth, as a comfort to us in our last days, brought before us by the narrative in which good Jeremiah Burroughes speaks of a miser who had his money bags laid near his hand on his dying bed! He kept taking them up, and saying, "Must I leave you? Must I leave you? Have I lived all these years for you, and now must I leave you?" And so he died. There is a tale told of another, who had many pains in his death, and especially the great pain of a disturbed conscience. He also had his money bags brought, one by one, with his mortgages, and bonds, and deeds, and putting them near his heart, he sighed, and said, "These won't do; these won't do; these won't do; take them away! What poor things they all are when I most need comfort in my dying moments!"

How distinctly love to Christ is brought out in the story of John Lambert, fastened to the stake, and burning to death, yet clapping his hands as he was burning, and crying out, "None but Christ! None but Christ!" until his nether extremities were burned, and he fell from the chains into the fire, still exclaiming in the midst of the flames, "None but Christ! None but Christ!" How clearly the truth stands out before you when you hear such stories as these! You can realize it almost as well as if the incident happened before your eyes. How well you can see the folly of misunderstanding between Christians in Mr. Jay's story of two men who were walking from opposite directions on a foggy night! Each saw what he thought was a terrible monster moving towards him, and making his heart

beat with terror; as they came nearer to each other, they found that the dreadful monsters were brothers. So, men of different denominations are often afraid of one another; but when they get close to each other, and know each other's hearts, they find out that they are brethren after all. The story of the negro and his master well illustrates the need of beginning at the beginning in heavenly things, and not meddling with the deeper points of our holy religion till we have learned its elements thoroughly. A poor negro was labouring hard to bring his master to a knowledge of the truth, and was urging him to exercise faith in Christ, when he excused himself because he could not understand the doctrine of election. "Ah! Massa," said the negro, "don't you know what comes before de Epistle to de Romans? You must read de Book de right way; de doctrine ob election is in Romans, and dere is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, first. You are only in Matthew yet; dat is about repentance; and when you get to John, you will read where de Lord Jesus Christ said dat God so loved de world, dat he gave his only begotten Son, dat whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but hab everlasting life." So, brethren, you can say to your hearers, "You will do better by reading the four Gospels first than by beginning to read in Romans; first study Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and then you can go on to the Epistles."

But I must not keep on giving you illustrations, because so many will suggest themselves. I have given you sufficient to show that they do make our preaching vivid and life-like; therefore, the more you have of them, the better. At the same time, gentlemen, I must warn you against the danger of having too many anecdotes in any one sermon. You ought, perhaps, to have a dish of salad on the table; but if you ask your friends to dinner, and give them nothing but salad, they will not fare very well, and will not care to come to your house again.

Thirdly, anecdotes and illustrations may be used *to explain either doctrines or duties to dull understandings*. They may, in fact, be the very best form of exposition. A preacher should instance, and illustrate, and exemplify his subject, so that his hearers may have real acquaintance with the matter he is bringing before them. If a man attempted to give me a description of a piece of machinery, he would possibly fail to make me comprehend what it was like; but if he will have the goodness to let me see a drawing of the various sections, and then of the whole machine, I will, some-

how or other, by hook or by crook, make out how it works. The pictorial representation of a thing is always a much more powerful means of instruction than any mere verbal description ever could be. It is just in this way that anecdotes and illustrations are so helpful to our hearers. For instance, take this anecdote as illustrating the text, "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." A little boy used to go up into a hay-loft to pray; but he found that, sometimes, persons came up, and disturbed him; therefore, the next time he climbed into the loft, he pulled the ladder up after him. Telling this story, you might explain how the boy thus entered into his closet, and shut the door. The meaning is not so much the literal entrance into a closet, or the shutting of the door, as the getting away from earthly sources of distraction, pulling up the ladder after us, and keeping out anything that might come in to hinder our secret devotions. I wish we could always pull the ladder up after us when we retire for private prayer; but many things try to climb that ladder. The devil himself will come up to disturb us if he can; and he can get into the hay-loft without any ladder.

What a capital exposition of the fifth commandment was that which was given by Corporal Trim, when he was asked, "What dost thou mean by honouring thy father and thy mother?" and he answered, "Please, your honour, it is allowing them a shilling a week out of my pay when they grow old." That was an admirable explanation of the meaning of the text. Then, if you are trying to show how we are to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, there is a story of a woman who, when asked by the minister what he had said on Sunday, replied that she did not remember the sermon; but it had touched her conscience, for when she got home she burned her bushel, which was short measure. There is another story which also goes to show that the gospel may be useful even to hearers who forget what they have heard. A woman is called upon by her minister on the Monday, and he finds her washing wool in a sieve, holding it under the pump. He asks her, "How did you enjoy last Sabbath's discourses?" and she says that they did her much good. "Well, what was the text?" She does not recollect. "What was the subject?" "Ah! sir, it is quite gone from me," says the poor woman. Does she remember any of the remarks that were made? No, they are all gone. "Well then, Mary," says the minister, "it could not have done you much good." Oh! but it had done her a great deal of good; and she explained it to him

by saying, "I will tell you, sir, how it is; I put this wool in the sieve under the pump, I pump on it, and all the water runs through the sieve, but then it washes the wool. So it is with your sermon; it comes into my heart, and then it runs right through my poor memory, which is like a sieve, but it washes me clean, sir." You might talk for a long while about the cleansing and sanctifying power of the Word, and it would not make such an impression upon your hearers as that simple story would.

What finer exposition of the text "Weep with them that weep," can you have than this pretty anecdote? "Mother," said little Annie, "I cannot make out why poor Widow Brown likes me to go in to see her; she says I do comfort her so; but, mother, I cannot say anything to comfort her, and as soon as she begins crying, I put my arms round her neck, and I cry, too, and she says that that comforts her." And so it does; that is the very essence of the comfort, the sympathy, the fellow-feeling that moved the little girl to weep with the weeping widow. Mr. Hervey thus illustrates the great truth of the different appearance of sin to the eye of God and the eye of man. He says that you may take a small insect, and with the tiniest needle make a puncture in it so minute that you can scarcely see it with the naked eye; but when you look at it through a microscope, you see an enormous rent, out of which there flows a purple stream, making the creature seem to you as though it had been smitten with the axe that killeth an ox. It is but a defect of our vision that we cannot see things correctly; but the microscope reveals them as they really are. Thus you may explain to your hearers how God's microscopic eye sees sin in its true aspects. Suppose that you wanted to set forth the character of Caleb, who followed the Lord fully; it would greatly help many of your people if you said that the name Caleb signifies a dog, and then showed how a dog follows his master. There is his owner on horseback, riding along the miry roads; but the dog keeps as close to him as he can, no matter how much mud and dirt are splashed upon him, and not heeding the kicks he might get from the horse's heels. Even so should we follow the Lord. If you wish to exemplify the shortness of time, you might bring in the poor sempstress, with her little piece of candle, stitching away to get her work done before the light went out.

Many preachers find the greatest difficulty in getting suitable metaphors to set forth simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a capital anecdote of an idiot, who was asked by the minister, who was trying to instruct him, whether he had a soul.

To the utter consternation of his kind teacher, he replied, "No, I have no soul." The preacher said he was greatly surprised, after he had been taught for years, that he did not know better than that; but the poor fellow thus explained himself, "I had a soul once, but I lost it; and Jesus Christ came and found it, and now I let him keep it, for it is his, it does not belong to me any longer." That is a fine picture of the way of salvation by simple faith in the substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the smallest child in the congregation might be able to understand it through the story of the poor idiot.

Fourthly, *there is a kind of reasoning in anecdotes and illustrations*, which is very clear to illogical minds; and many of our hearers, unfortunately, have such minds, yet they can understand illustrative instances and stubborn facts. Truthful anecdotes are facts, and facts are stubborn things. Instances, when sufficiently multiplied, as we know by the inductive philosophy, prove a point. Two instances may not prove it; but twenty may prove it to a demonstration. Take the very important matter of answers to prayer. You can prove that God answers prayer by quoting anecdote after anecdote, that you know to be authentic, of instances in which God has really heard and answered prayer. Take that capital little book by Mr. Prime on the Power of Prayer; there, I believe you have the truth upon this subject demonstrated as clearly as you could have it in any proposition in Euclid. I think that, if such a number of facts could be instanced in connection with any question relating to geology or astronomy, the point would be regarded as settled. The writer brings such abundant proofs of God's having heard prayer, that even men who reject inspiration ought, at least, to acknowledge that this is a marvellous phenomenon for which they cannot account by any other explanation than the one which proclaims that there is a God who sitteth in heaven, and who hath respect unto the cry of his people upon the earth.

I have heard of some persons who have had objections to labour for the conversion of their children on the ground that God would save his own without any effort on our part. I remember making one man wince who held this view, by telling him of a father who would never teach his child to pray, or have him instructed even as to the meaning of prayer. He thought it was wrong, and that such work ought to be left to God's Holy Spirit. The boy fell down, and broke his leg, and had to have it taken off; and all the

while the surgeon was amputating it, the boy was cursing and swearing in the most frightful manner. The good surgeon said to the father, "You see, you would not teach your boy to pray, but the devil evidently had no objection to teach him to swear." That is the mischief of it; if we do not try our best to bring our children to Christ, there is another who will do his worst to drag them down to hell. A mother once said to her sick son, who was about to die, and was in a dreadful state of mind, "My boy, I am sorry you are in such trouble; I am sure I never taught you any hurt." "No, mother," he answered, "but you never taught me any good; and therefore there was room for all sorts of evil to get into me." All these stories will be to many people the very best kind of argument that you could possibly use with them. You bring to them facts, and these facts reach their conscience, even though it is imbedded in several inches of callousness.

I do not know of any reasoning that would explain the need of submission to the will of God better than the telling of the story, which Mr. Gilpin gives us in his *Life*, of his being called in to pray with a woman whose boy was very ill. The good man asked that God would, if it were his will, restore the dear child to life and health, when the mother interrupted him, and said, "No, I cannot agree to such a prayer as that; I cannot put it in that shape, it must be God's will to restore him. I cannot bear that my child should die; pray that he may live whether it is God's will or not." He answered, "Woman, I cannot pray that prayer, but it is answered; your child will recover, but you will live to rue the day that you made such a request." Twenty years after, there was a woman carried away in a fainting fit from under a drop at Tyburn, for her son had lived long enough to bring himself to the gallows by his crimes. The mother's wicked prayer had been heard, and God had answered it. So, if you want to prove the power of the gospel, do not go on expending words to no purpose, but tell the stories of cases you have met with that illustrate the truth you are enforcing, for such anecdotes will convince your hearers as no other kind of reasoning can. I think that is clear enough to every one of you.

Anecdotes are useful, also, because they often appeal very forcibly to human nature. In order to rebuke those who profane the Sabbath, tell the story of the gentleman who had seven sovereigns, and who met with a poor fellow, to whom he gave six out of the seven, and then the wicked wretch turned round and robbed him of the seventh. How clearly that sets forth the

ingratitude of our sinful race in depriving God of that one day out of the seven which he has set apart for his own service ! This story appeals to nature, too. Two or three boys come round one of their companions, and they say to him, " Let us go and get some cherries out of your father's garden." " No," he replies, " I cannot steal, and my father does not wish those cherries to be picked." " Oh ! but then your father is so kind, and he never beats you." " Ah ! I know that is true," answers the boy, " and that is the very reason why I would not steal his cherries." This would show that the grace and goodness of God do not lead his children to licentiousness ; but, on the contrary, they restrain them from sin. This story, also, appeals to human nature, and shows that the fathers of the Church are not always to be depended upon as fountains of authority. A nobleman had heard of a certain very old man, who lived in a village, and he sought out and found him, and ascertained that he was seventy years of age. He was talking with him, supposing him to be the oldest inhabitant, when the man said, " Oh ! no, sir, I am not the oldest ; I am not the father of the village ; there is an older one, my father, who is still alive." So, I have heard of some who have said that they turned away from " the fathers " of the Church to the very old fathers, that is, away from what are commonly called " the patristic fathers ", back to the apostles, who are the true fathers and grandfathers of the Christian Church.

Sometimes, anecdotes have force in them on account of their appealing to the sense of the ludicrous. Of course, I must be very careful here, for it is a sort of tradition of the fathers that it is wrong to laugh on Sundays. The eleventh commandment is, that we are to love one another, and then, according to some people, the twelfth is, " Thou shalt pull a long face on Sunday." I must confess that I would rather hear people laugh than I would see them asleep in the house of God ; and I would rather get the truth into them through the medium of ridicule than I would have the truth neglected, or leave the people to perish through lack of reception of the truth. I do believe in my heart that there may be as much holiness in a laugh as in a cry ; and that, sometimes, to laugh is the better thing of the two, for I may weep, and be murmuring, and repining, and thinking all sorts of bitter thoughts against God ; while, at another time, I may laugh the laugh of sarcasm against sin, and so evince a holy earnestness in the defence of the truth. I do not know why ridicule is to be given up to Satan as a weapon to be used against us, and not to

be employed by us as a weapon against him. I will venture to affirm that the Reformation owed almost as much to the sense of the ridiculous in human nature as to anything else, and that those humorous squibs and caricatures, that were issued by the friends of Luther, did more to open the eyes of Germany to the abominations of the priesthood than the more solid and ponderous arguments against Romanism. I know no reason why we should not, on suitable occasions, try the same style of reasoning. "It is a dangerous weapon," it will be said, "and many men will cut their fingers with it." Well, that is their own look-out; but I do not know why we should be so particular about their cutting their fingers if they can, at the same time, cut the throat of sin, and do serious damage to the great adversary of souls.

Here is a story that I should not mind telling on a Sunday for the benefit of certain people, who are good at hearing sermons and attending prayer-meetings, but who are very bad hands at business. They never work on Sundays because they never work on any day of the week; they forget that part of the commandment which says, "Six days shalt thou labour," which is just as binding as the other part, "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." To these people who never labour because they are so heavenly-minded, I would tell the story of a certain monk, who entered a monastery, but who would not work in the fields, or the garden, or at making clothes, or anything else, because, as he told the superior, he was a spiritually-minded monk. He wondered, when the dinner-hour approached, that there came to him no summons from the refectory. So he went down to the prior, and said, "Don't the brethren eat here? Are you not going to have any dinner?" The prior said, "We do, because we are carnal; but you are so spiritual that you do not work, and therefore you do not require to eat; that is why we did not call you. The law of this monastery is that, if any man will not work, neither shall he eat."

That is a good story of the boy in Italy who had his Testament seized, and who said to the *gendarme*, "Why do you seize this book? Is it a bad book?" "Yes," was the answer. "Are you sure the book is bad?" he enquired; and again the reply was, "Yes." "Then, why do you not seize the Author of it if it is a bad book?" That was a fine piece of sarcasm at those who had a hatred of the Scriptures, and yet professed to have love to Christ. That is another good story of our friend the Irishman, who, when he was asked by the priest what warrant an ignorant

man such as he was had for reading the Bible, said, "Truth, but I have a search-warrant; for it says, 'Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.'"

This story would not be amiss, I think, as a sort of ridiculous argument showing what power the gospel ought to have over the human mind. Dr. Moffat tells us of a certain Kafir, who came to him, one day, saying that the New Testament, which the missionary had given him a week before, had spoiled his dog. The man said that his dog had been a very good hunting dog, but that he had torn the Testament to pieces, and eaten it up, and now he was quite spoiled. "Never mind," said Dr. Moffat, "I will give you another Testament." "Oh!" said the man, "it is not that that troubles me, I do not mind the dog spoiling the book, for I could buy another; but the book has spoiled the dog." "How is that?" enquired the missionary; and the Kafir replied, "The dog will be of no use to me now, because he has eaten the Word of God, and that will make him love his enemies, so that he will be of no good for hunting." The man supposed that not even a dog could receive the New Testament without being sweetened in temper thereby; that is, in truth, what ought to be the case with all who feed upon the gospel of Christ. I should not hesitate to tell that story after Dr. Moffat, and I should, of course, use it to show that, when a man has received the truth as it is in Jesus, there ought to be a great change in him, and he ought never to be of any use to his old master again.

When the priests were trying to pervert the natives of Tahiti to Romanism, they had a fine picture which they hoped would convince the people of the excellence of the Church of Rome. There were certain dead logs of wood: whom were they to represent? They were the heretics, who were to go into the fire. And who were these small branches of the tree? They were the faithful. Who were the larger ones? They were the priests. And who were the next? They were the cardinals. And who was the trunk of the tree? Oh, that was the pope! And the root, whom did that set forth? Oh, the root was Jesus Christ! So the poor natives said, "Well, we do not know anything about the trunk, or the branches; but we have got the root, and we mean to stick to that, and not give it up." If we have the root, if we have Christ, we may laugh to scorn all the pretensions and delusions of men.

These stories may make us laugh, but they may also smite error

right through the heart, and lay it dead ; and they may, therefore, lawfully be used as weapons with which we may go forth to fight the Lord's battles.

Fifthly, another use of anecdotes and illustrations lies in the fact that *they help the memory to grasp the truth*. There is a story told—though I will not vouch for the truth of it—of a certain countryman, who had been persuaded by some one that all Londoners were thieves ; and, therefore, on coming to London for the first time, he tried to secure his watch by putting it into his waistcoat pocket, and then covering it all over with fish-hooks. “ Now,” he thought, “ if any gentleman tries to get my watch, he will remember it.” The story says that, as he was walking along, he desired to know the time himself, and put his own hand into his pocket, forgetting all about the fish-hooks. The effect produced upon him can better be imagined than described. Now, it seems to me that a sermon should always be like that countryman's pocket, full of fish-hooks, so that, if anybody comes in to listen to it, he will get some forget-me-not, some remembrancer, fastened in his ear, and it may be, in his heart and conscience. Let him drop in just at the end of the discourse, there should be something at the close that will strike and stick. As when we walk in our farmer friends' fields, there are certain burrs that are sure to cling to our clothes ; and brush as we may, some of the relics of the fields remain upon our garments, so there ought to be some burr in every sermon that will stick to those who hear it.

What do you remember best in the discourses you heard years ago ? I will venture to say that it is some anecdote that the preacher related. It may possibly be some pithy sentence ; but it is more probable that it is some striking story which was told in the course of the sermon. Rowland Hill, a little while before he died, was visiting an old friend, who said to him, “ Mr. Hill, it is now sixty-five years since I first heard you preach ; but I remember your text, and a part of your sermon.” “ Well,” asked the preacher, “ what part of the sermon do you recollect ? ” His friend answered, “ You said that some people, when they went to hear a sermon, were very squeamish about the delivery of the preacher. Then you said, ‘ Supposing you went to hear the will of one of your relatives read, and you were expecting a legacy from him ; you would hardly think of criticizing the manner in which the lawyer read the will ; but you would be all attention to hear whether anything was left to you, and if so, how much ; and

that is the way to hear the gospel.'” Now, the man would not have recollected that for sixty-five years if Mr. Hill had not put the matter in that illustrative form. If he had said, “Dear friends, you must listen to the gospel for its own sake, and not merely for the charms of the preacher’s oratory, or those delightful soaring periods which gratify your ears,” if he had put it in the very pretty manner in which some people can do the thing, I will be bound to say that the man would have remembered it as long as a duck recollects the last time it went into the water, and no longer ; for it would have been so common to have spoken in that way ; but putting the truth in the striking manner that he did, it was remembered for sixty-five years.

An American gentleman related the following anecdote, which just answers the purpose I have in view, so I will pass it on to you. He said, “When I was a boy, I used to hear the story of a tailor who lived to a great age, and became very wealthy, so that he was an object of envy to all who knew him. His life, as all lives will, drew to a close ; but before he passed away, feeling some desire to benefit the members of his craft, he gave out word that, on a certain day, he would be happy to communicate to all the tailors of the neighbourhood the secret by which they might become wealthy. A great number of knights of the thimble came, and while they waited in anxious silence to hear the important revelation, he was raised up in his bed, and with his expiring breath uttered this short sentence, “*Always put a knot in your thread.*” That is why I recommend you, brethren, to use anecdotes and illustrations, because they put knots in the thread of your discourse. What is the use of pulling the end of your thread through the material on which you are working? Yet, has it not been the case with very many of the sermons to which we have listened, or the discourses we have ourselves delivered? The bulk of what we have heard has just gone through our minds without leaving any lasting impression, and all we recollect is some anecdote that was told by the preacher.

There is an authenticated case of a man being converted by a sermon eighty-five years after he had heard it preached. Mr. Flavel, at the close of a discourse, instead of pronouncing the usual benediction, stood up, and said, “How can I dismiss you with a blessing, for many of you are ‘Anathema Maranatha’, because you love not the Lord Jesus Christ?” A lad of fifteen heard that remarkable utterance ; and eighty-five years afterwards, sitting under a hedge, I think in Virginia, the whole scene came

vividly before him as if it had been but the day before; and it pleased God to bless Mr. Flavel's words to his conversion, and he lived three years longer to bear good testimony that he had felt the power of the truth in his heart.

Sixthly, anecdotes and illustrations are useful because *they frequently arouse the feelings*. They will not do this, however, if you tell the same stories over and over again ever so many times. I recollect, when I first heard that wonderful story about "There is another man," I cried a good deal over it. Poor soul, just rescued, half-dead, with only a few rags on him, and yet he said, "There is another man," needing to be saved. The second time I heard the story, I liked it, but I did not think it was quite so new as at first; and the third time I heard it, I thought that I never wanted to hear it again. I do not know how many times I have heard it since; but I can always tell when it is coming out. The brother draws himself up, and looks wonderfully solemn, and in a sepulchral tone says, "There is another man," and I think to myself, "Yes, and I wish there had not been," for I have heard that story till I am sick and tired of it. Even a good anecdote may get so hackneyed that there is no force in it, and no use in retailing it any longer.

Still, a live illustration is better for appealing to the feelings of an audience than any amount of description could possibly be. When Mr. Beecher brought a beautiful slave girl, with her manacles on, into his pulpit, he did more for the anti-slavery cause than he might have done by the most eloquent harangue. What we want in these times is not to listen to long prelections upon some dry subject, but to hear something practical, something matter-of-fact, that comes home to our every-day reasoning; and when we get this, then our hearts are soon stirred.

I have no doubt that the sight of a death-bed would move men much more than that admirable work called *Drelincourt on Death*, a book which, I should think, nobody has ever been able to read through. There may have been instances of persons who have attempted it; but I believe that, long before they have reached the latter end, they have been in a state of asphyxia or coma, and have been obliged to be rubbed with hot flannels; and the book has had to be removed to a distance before they could recover. If you have not read *Drelincourt on Death*, I believe I know what you have read, that is, the ghost story that is stitched in at the end of the book. The work would not sell, the whole

impression was upon the shelves of the bookseller, when Defoe wrote the fiction entitled, "A True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal after her death to Mrs. Bargrave," in which *Drelincourt on Death* is recommended by the apparition as the best book on the subject. This story had not a vestige or shadow of truth in it, it was all a piece of imagination; but it was put in at the end of the book, and then the whole edition was speedily cleared out, and more were wanted. It may be something like that very often with your sermons; only you must tell the people of what has actually occurred, and so you will retain their attention, and reach their hearts.

Many have been moved to self-sacrifice by the story of the Moravians, in South Africa, who saw a large enclosed space of ground, in which there were persons rotting away with leprosy, some without arms and some without legs; and these Moravians could not preach to the poor lepers without going in there themselves for life to rot with them, and they did so. Two more of the same noble band of brethren sold themselves into slavery in the West Indies, in order that they might be allowed to preach to the slaves. When you can give such instances as these of missionary disinterestedness and devotedness, it will do more to arouse a spirit of enthusiasm for foreign missions than all your closely-reasoned arguments could possibly do.

Who has not heard and felt the force of the story of the two miners, when the fuse was burning, and only one could escape, and the Christian man cried out to his unconverted companion, "Escape for your life, because, if you die, you are lost; but if I die, it is all right with me; so you go."

The fool's plan, too, I have sometimes used as a striking illustration. There was a little boat which got wrecked, and the man in it was trying to swim to shore, but the current was too strong for him. After he had been drowned an hour, a man said, "I could have saved him," and when they asked him how he could have saved him, he described a plan that seemed to be most excellent and feasible, by which the man might, no doubt, have been saved; but then, unfortunately, by that time he was drowned! So, there are some who are always wise just too late, some who may have to say to themselves, when such and such a one is gone the way of all living, "What might I not have done for him if I had but taken him in time!" Brethren, let that anecdote be a reminder to us all that we should seek to be wise in winning souls before it is too late to rescue them from everlasting destruction.

Seventhly, and lastly, anecdotes and illustrations are exceedingly useful because *they catch the ear of the utterly careless*. Something is wanted in every sermon for this class of people; and an anecdote is well calculated to catch the ear of the thoughtless and the ungodly. We really desire their salvation, and we would bait our trap in any way possible by which we might catch them for Christ. We cannot expect our young people to come and listen to learned doctrinal disquisitions that are not at all embellished with anything that interests their immature minds. Nay, even grown-up people, after the toils of the week, some of them busy till early on the Sunday morning, cannot be expected to attend to long prosaic discourses which are not broken by a single anecdote.

Oh, dear, dear, dear! How I do pity those unpractical brethren who do not seem to know to whom they are preaching! "Ah!" said a brother once, "whenever I preach, I do not know where to look, and so I look up at the ventilator." Now, there is not anybody up in the ventilator; there cannot be supposed to be anybody there, unless the angels of heaven are listening there to hear the words of truth. A minister should not preach *before* the people, but he should preach right *at* them; let him look straight at them; if he can, let him search them through and through, and take stock of them, as it were, and see what they are like, and then suit his message to them.

I have often seen some poor fellow standing in the aisle at the Tabernacle. Why, he looks just like a sparrow that has got into a church, and cannot get out again! He cannot make out what sort of service it is; he begins to count how many people sit in the front row in the gallery, and all kinds of ideas pass through his mind. Now I want to attract his attention; how shall I do it? If I quote a text of Scripture, he may not know what it means, and may not be interested in it. Shall I put a bit of Latin into the sermon, or quote the original Hebrew or Greek of my text? That will not do for such a man. What shall I do? Ah! I know a story that will, I believe, just fit him. Out it comes, and the man does not look up at the gallery any more; but he is wondering whatever the preacher is at. Something is said that so exactly suits his case that he begins to ask himself who has been telling the minister about him, and he thinks, "Why, I know; my wife comes to hear this man sometimes, so she has been telling him all about me!" Then he feels curious to hear more, and while he is looking up at the preacher, and listening to the truth that is being proclaimed, the first gleam of light on divine things

dawns upon him; but if we had kept on with our regular discourse, and had not gone out of our way, what might have become of that man, I cannot tell. "They say I ramble," said Rowland Hill, in a sermon I have been reading this afternoon; "they say I ramble, but it is because you ramble, and I am obliged to ramble after you. They say I do not stick to my subject; but, thank God, I always stick to my object, which is, the winning of your souls, and bringing you to the cross of Jesus Christ!"

Mr. Bertram aptly illustrates the way in which men are engrossed in worldly cares by telling the story of the captain of a whaling ship, whom he tried to interest in the things of God, and who said, "It is no use, sir; your conversation will not have any effect upon me. I cannot hear what you are saying, or understand the subject you are talking about. I left my home to try to catch whales, I have been a year and nine months looking for whales, sir, and I have not caught a whale yet. I have been ploughing the deep in search of whales; when I go to bed, I dream of whales; and when I get up in the morning, I wonder if there will be any whales caught that day; there is a whale in my heart, sir, a whale in my brain, and it is of no use for you to talk to me about anything else but whales." So, your people have their business in their heads, and in their hearts, they want to make a fortune, and retire; or else they have a family of children to bring up, and Susan must be married, and John must be got into a situation, and it is no use for you to talk to them about the things of God unless you can drive away the whales that keep floundering and splashing about.

There is a merchant, perhaps, who has just thought of some bad bill; or another has looked across the building, and noticed a piece of ribbon of a particular colour, and he thinks, "Yes, I ought to have had a larger stock of that kind of thing, I see that it is getting fashionable!" or it may be that one of the hearers has caught sight of his neighbour, and he thinks he must pay him a visit on the morrow; and so people's thoughts are occupied with all sorts of subjects beside that of which the preacher is speaking. You ask me how I know that this is the case. Well, I know because I have been guilty of the same offence myself; I find this occur when I am listening to another brother preaching. I do not think, when I am preaching, that I get on very well; but sometimes, when I go into the country, and take the morning and evening services, and then hear some one else in the afternoon, I think, "Well, really, when I was up there, I thought I was a

stick : but *now* ! I only wish I had my turn again !” Now, this is very wrong, to let such thoughts come into our minds ; but as we are all very apt to wander, the preacher should carry anecdotes and illustrations into the pulpit, and use them as nails to fasten the people’s attention to the subject of his sermon.

Mr. Paxton Hood once said, in a lecture that I heard him deliver, “ Some preachers expect too much of their hearers ; they take a number of truths into the pulpit as a man might carry up a box of nails ; and then, supposing the congregation to be posts, they take out a nail, and expect it to get into the post by itself. Now that is not the way to do it. You must take your nail, hold it up against the post, hammer it in, and then clinch it on the other side ; and then it is that you may expect the great Master of assemblies to fasten the nails so that they will not fall out.” We must try thus to get the truth into the people, for it will never get in of itself ; and we must remember that the hearts of our hearers are not open, like a church door, so that the truth may go in, and take its place, and sit upon its throne to be worshipped there. No, we have often to break open the doors with great effort, and to thrust the truth into places where it will not at first be a welcome guest, but where, afterwards, the better it is known, the more it will be loved.

Illustrations and anecdotes will greatly help to make a way for the truth to enter ; and they will do it by catching the ear of the careless and the inattentive. We must try to be like Mr. Whitefield, of whom a shipbuilder said, “ When I have been to hear anybody else preach, I have always been able to lay down a ship from stem to stern ; but when I listen to Mr. Whitefield, I cannot even lay the keel.” And another, a weaver, said, “ I have often, when I have been in church, calculated how many looms the place would hold ; but when I listen to that man, I forget my weaving altogether.” You must endeavour, brethren, to make your people forget matters relating to this world by interweaving the whole of divine truth with the passing things of every day, and this you will do by a judicious use of anecdotes and illustrations.

Now, gentlemen, these seven reasons—that they interest the mind and secure the attention of our hearers, that they render the teaching vivid and life-like, that they explain some difficult passages to dull understandings, that they help the reasoning faculties of certain minds, that they aid the memory, that they arouse the

feelings, and that they catch the ear of the careless—have reconciled me for many a day to the use of anecdotes and illustrations, and I think it is very likely that they will reconcile you to the use of them, too.

At the same time, I must repeat what I before said, we must take care that we do not let our anecdotes and illustrations be like empty casks that carry nothing. We must not have it truthfully said of our sermons, as was said by a certain lady, who, after having heard a clergyman preach, was asked what she thought of the sermon, and whether there was not much spirit in it. "Oh, yes!" she replied, "it was all spirit; there was no body to it at all." There must be some "body" in every discourse, some really sound doctrine, some suitable instruction for our hearers to carry home; not merely stories to amuse them, but solid truth to be received in the heart, and wrought out in the life. If this be so with your sermons, my dear brethren, I shall not have spoken to you this afternoon in vain upon the uses of anecdotes and illustrations.

LECTURE IV.

Where can we find Anecdotes and Illustrations ?

DEAR BRETHREN, after my last lecture to you, upon the uses of anecdotes and illustrations, you are probably quite ready to employ them in your discourses ; but some of you may ask, "Where can we get them ?" At the very beginning of this afternoon's talk, let me say that *nobody need make anecdotes* in order to interest a congregation. I have heard of one, who called to see a minister on a Friday, and he was told by the servant that her master could not be seen, for he was up in his study "making anecdotes." That kind of work will not do for a Christian minister. I would also bid you beware of the many common anecdotes, which are often repeated, but which I half suspect could not be proved to be matters of fact. Whenever I have the slightest suspicion about the truth of a story, I drop it at once ; and I think that everyone else should do the same. So long as the anecdotes are current, and are generally believed, and provided they can be used for a profitable purpose, I believe they may be told, without any affirmation as to their truthfulness being made in a court of justice ; but the moment any doubt comes across the mind of the preacher as to whether the tale is at least founded on fact, I think he had better look for something else, for he has the whole world to go to as a storehouse of illustration.

If you want to interest your congregation, and keep up their attention, you can find anecdotes and illustrations in many channels, like golden grains glistening amongst the mountain streams. For instance, there is *current history*. You may take up the daily newspaper, and find illustrations there. In my little shilling book, *The Bible and the Newspaper*, I have given specimens of how this may be done ; and when I was preparing the present lecture, I took up a newspaper to see if I could find an illustration in it, and I soon found one. There was an account of a man at Wandsworth,

who was discovered, with a gun and a dog, trespassing on some gentleman's preserves, and he said that he was only looking for mushrooms! Can you imagine what the gun and the dog had to do with mushrooms? However, the keeper felt in the man's pocket, and laying hold of something soft, asked, "What is this?" "Oh!" said the poacher, "it is only a rabbit." When it was suggested to him that the creature's ears were too long for a rabbit, he said that it was only a leveret, whereas it proved to be a very fine and plump hare. The man then said that he had found the hare lying near some mushrooms, but his intention was to get the mushrooms only! Now, that is a capital illustration. As soon as ever you lay hold of a man, and begin to accuse him of sin, he says, "Sin, sir! Oh, dear no! I was only doing a very proper thing, just what I have a perfect right to do; I was looking for mushrooms, I was not poaching!" You press him a little more closely, and try to bring him to conviction of sin; and then he says, "Well, perhaps it was hardly the thing, it may have been a little amiss; but it was only a rabbit!" When the man cannot any longer deny that he is guilty of sin, he says that it was only a very little one; and it is long before you can get him to admit that sin is exceeding sinful; indeed, no human power can ever produce genuine conviction in the heart of a single sinner; it must be the work of the Holy Spirit.

I also read, in the same newspaper, of a calamitous shipwreck, caused through the lack of lights. You could easily turn that incident to account by using it to illustrate the destruction of souls through the want of a knowledge of Christ. I have no doubt, if you were to take up any of this morning's daily papers, you would very readily find an abundance of illustrations. Mr. Newman Hall, in addressing us once, said that every Christian minister ought to read regularly his Bible and *The Times* newspaper. I should imagine, from the usual mode of his address, that he does so himself. Whether you read that particular paper, or any other, you should somehow keep yourselves well stored with illustrations taken from the ordinary transactions going on round about you. I pity even a Sunday-school teacher, much more a minister of the gospel, who could not make use of such incidents as the terrible burning of the church at Santiago, the great fire at London Bridge, the entrance into London of the Princess Alexandra, the taking of the census; and, indeed, anything that attracts public attention. There is in all these events an illustration, a simile, an allegory, which may point a moral, and adorn a tale.

You may sometimes adapt *local history* to the illustration of your subject. When a minister is preaching in any particular district, he will often find it best to catch the ears of the people, and engross their attention, by relating some anecdote that relates to the place where they live. Whenever I can, I get the histories of various counties; for, having to go into all sorts of country towns and villages to preach, I find that there is a great deal of useful material to be dug out of even dull, dry, topographical books. They begin, perhaps, with the name of John Smith, labourer, the man who keeps the parish register, and winds up the parish clock, and makes mouse-traps, and catches rats, and does fifty other useful things; but if you have the patience to read on, you will find much information that you could get nowhere else, and you will probably meet with many incidents and anecdotes that you can use as illustrations of the truth you are seeking to set forth.

Preaching at Winslow, in Buckinghamshire, it would not be at all amiss to introduce the incident of good Benjamin Keach, the pastor of the Baptist church in that town, standing in the pillory in the market-place in the year 1664, "for writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book, entitled, *The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer.*" I do not think, however, that, if I were preaching at Wapping, I should call the people "*Wapping sinners*", as Rowland Hill is said to have done, when he told them that "Christ could save old sinners, great sinners, yea, even *Wapping sinners!*" At Craven Chapel, it would be most appropriate to tell the story of Lord Craven, who was packing up his goods to go into the country at the time of the Great Plague of London, when his servant said to him, "My lord, does your God live only in the country?" "No," replied Lord Craven, "**he is here as well as there.**" "Well, then," said the servant, "if I were your lordship, I think I would stop here; you will be as safe in the city as in the country;" and Lord Craven did stop there, relying upon the good providence of God.

Beside this, brethren, you have the marvellous storehouse of *ancient and modern history*—Roman, Greek, and English—with which, of course, you are seeking to become well acquainted. Who can possibly read the old classic tales without feeling his soul on fire? As you rise from their perusal, you will not merely be familiar with the events which happened in "the brave days of old", but you will have learnt many lessons that may be of service in your preaching to-day. For instance, there is the story of

Phidias and the statue of the god which he had carved. After he had finished it, he had chiselled in the corner, in small letters, the word "Phidias", and it was objected that the statue could not be worshipped as a god, nor considered sacred, while it bore the sculptor's name. It was even seriously questioned whether Phidias should not be stoned to death because he had so desecrated the statue. How could he dare, they asked, to put his own name on the image of a god? So, some of us are very apt to want to put our little names down at the bottom of any work which we have done for God, that we may be remembered, whereas we ought rather to upbraid ourselves for wishing to have any of the credit of that which God the Holy Ghost enables us to do.

Then there is that other story of an ancient sculptor, who was about to put the image of a god into a heathen temple, although he had not finished that portion of the statue which was to be imbedded in the wall. The priest demurred, and declared that the statue was not completed. The sculptor said, "That part of the god will never be seen, for it will be built into the wall." "The gods can see in the wall," answered the priest. In like manner, the most private parts of our life, those secret matters that can never reach the human eye, are still under the ken of the Almighty, and ought to be attended to with the greatest care. It is not sufficient for us to maintain our public reputation among our fellow-creatures, for our God can see in the wall, he notices our coldness in the closet of communion, and he perceives our faults and failures in the family.

Trying once to set forth how the Lord Jesus Christ delights in his people because they are his own handiwork, I found a classic story of Cyrus extremely useful. When showing a foreign ambassador round his garden, Cyrus said to him, "You cannot possibly take such an interest in these flowers and trees as I do, for I laid out the whole garden myself, and every plant here I planted with my own hand. I have watered them, and I have seen them grow, I have been a husbandman to them, and therefore I love them far better than you can." So, the Lord Jesus Christ loves the fair garden of his Church, because he laid it all out, and planted it with his own gracious hand, and he has watched over every plant, and nourished and cherished it.

The days of the Crusaders are a peculiarly rich period for noble stories that will make good illustrations. We read that the soldiers of Godfrey de Bouillon, when they came within sight of the city of Jerusalem, were so charmed with the view that they fell on

their faces, and then rose to their feet, and clapped their hands, and made the mountains ring with their shouts of joy. Thus, when we get within sight of the New Jerusalem, our happy home on high, whose name is ever dear to us, we will make our dying chamber ring with hallelujahs, and even the angels shall hear our songs of praise and thanksgiving. It is also recorded, concerning this same Godfrey, that, when he had entered Jerusalem at the head of his victorious army, he refused to wear the crown with which his soldiers wanted to deck his brow, "For," said he, "why should I wear a crown of gold in the city where my Lord wore a crown of thorns?" This is a good lesson for us to learn for ourselves, and to teach to our people. In the world where Christ was despised and rejected of men, it would be unseemly for a Christian to be seeking to win earthly honours, or ambitiously hunting after fame. The disciple must not think of being above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord.

Then you might easily make an illustration out of that romantic story, which may or may not be true, of Queen Eleanor sucking the poison out of her husband's wounded arm. Many of us, I trust, would be willing, as it were, to suck out all the slander and venom from the arm of Christ's Church, and to bear any amount of suffering ourselves, so long as the Church itself might escape and live. Would not any one of you, my brethren, gladly put his lips to the envenomed wounds of the Church to-day, and suffer even unto death, sooner than let the doctrines of Christ be impugned, and the cause of God be dishonoured?

What a fine field of illustration lies open to you in *religious history*! It is difficult to tell where to begin digging in this mine of precious treasure. The story of Luther and the Jew might be used to set forth the evil of sin, and how to avoid it. A Jew was seeking an opportunity of stabbing the Reformer; but Luther received a portrait of the would-be murderer, so that, wherever he went, he was on his guard against the assassin. Using this fact himself as an illustration, Luther said, "God knows that there are sins that would destroy us, and he has therefore given us portraits of them in his Word, so that, wherever we see them, we may say, 'That is a sin that would stab me; I must beware of that evil thing, and keep out of its way.'"

Stout Hugh Latimer, in that famous story of an incident in his trial before several bishops, brings out very clearly the omnipresence and omniscience of God, and the care that we ought to

exercise in the presence of One who can read our most secret thoughts and imaginations. He says, "I was once in examination before five or six bishops, where I had much trouble; thrice every week I came to examinations, and many traps and snares were laid to get something. . . . At last, I was brought forth to be examined in a chamber hung with arras, where I was wont to be examined; but now at this time the chamber was somewhat altered. For whereas, before, there was wont always to be a fire in the chimney, now the fire was taken away, and an arras hung over the chimney, and the table stood near the fire-place. There was, amongst the bishops who examined me, one with whom I had been very familiar, and took him for my great friend, an aged man, and he sat next to the table's end. Then, amongst all other questions, he put forth a very subtle and crafty one, and such a one, indeed, as I could not think so great danger in. And when I should make answer, 'I pray you, Mr. Latimer,' said one, 'speak out; I am very thick of hearing, and there may be many that sit far off.' I marvelled at this, that I was bid to speak out, and began to suspect, and give an ear to the chimney; and there I heard a pen writing in the chimney behind the cloth. They had appointed one there to write all mine answers, for they made sure that I should not start from them; and there was no starting from them. God was my good Lord, and gave me answer, else I could never have escaped." Preaching, some years afterwards, Latimer himself told the story, and applied the illustration. "My hearer," said he, "there is a recording pen always at work behind the arras, taking down all thou sayest, and noting all thou doest, therefore be thou careful that thy words and acts are worthy of record in God's Book of Remembrance."

You might aptly illustrate the doctrine of God's special providential care of his servants by relating the story of John Knox, who, one evening, refused to sit in his usual seat, though he did not know any particular reason for so acting. No one was allowed to occupy that chair, and during the evening, a shot came in through the window, and struck a candlestick that stood immediately opposite where John Knox would have been sitting if he had taken his accustomed place. There is also the case of the godly minister, who, in escaping from his persecutors, went into a hay-loft, and hid himself in the hay. The soldiers went into the place, pricking and thrusting with their swords and bayonets, and the good man even felt the cold steel touch the sole of his foot, and the scratch which was made remained for years: yet his enemies

did not discover him. Afterwards, a hen came and laid an egg every day hard by the place where he was hidden, and so he was sustained as well as preserved until it was safe for him to leave his hiding-place. It was either the same minister, or one of his persecuted brethren, who was providentially protected by such a humble agent as a spider. This is the story as I have read it:—“Receiving friendly warning of an intended attempt to apprehend him, and finding men were on his track, he took refuge in a malt-house, and crept into the empty kiln, where he lay down. Immediately after, he saw a spider lower itself across the narrow entrance by which he had got in, thus fixing the first line of what was soon wrought into a large and beautiful web. The weaver and the web, placed directly between him and the light, were very conspicuous. He was so much struck with the skill and diligence of the spider, and so much absorbed in watching her work, that he forgot his own danger. By the time the network was completed, crossing and re-crossing the mouth of the kiln in every direction, his pursuers came into the malt-house to search for him. He noted their steps, and listened to their cruel words while they looked about. Then they came close to the kiln, and he overheard one say to another, ‘It’s no use to look in *there*; the old villain can never be there: look at that spider’s web; he could never have got in *there* without breaking it.’ Without further search they went to seek *elsewhere*, and he escaped safely out of their hands.”

There is another story, I have somewhere met with, of a prisoner, during the American war, who was put into a cell in which there was a little slit through which a soldier’s eye always watched him day and night. Whatever the prisoner did, whether he ate, or drank, or slept, the sentinel’s eye was perpetually gazing at him; and the thought of it, he said, was perfectly dreadful to him, it almost drove him mad; he could not bear the idea of having that man’s eye always scrutinizing him. He could scarcely sleep; his very breathing became a misery, because, turn which way he would, he could never escape from the gaze of that soldier’s eye. That story might be used as an illustration of the fact that God’s omniscient eye is always looking at every one of us.

I remember making two or three of my congregation speak out pretty loudly by telling them this story, which I read in an American tract. I suppose it may be true; I receive it as reliable, and I wish I could tell it as it is printed. A Christian minister, residing near the backwoods, took a walk one evening for silent meditation. He went much farther than he intended, and, missing

the track, wandered away into the woods. He kept on endeavouring to find the road to his home; but failed to do so. He was afraid that he would have to spend the night in some tree; but suddenly, as he was going forward, he saw the glimmer of lights in the distance, and therefore pressed on, hoping to find shelter in a friendly cottage. A strange sight met his gaze; a meeting was being held in a clearing in the middle of the woods, the place being lit up with blazing pine-torches. He thought, "Well, here are some Christian people met to worship God; I am glad that what I thought was an awkward mistake in losing my way has brought me here; I may, perhaps, both do good and get good."

To his horror, however, he found that it was an atheistical gathering, and that the speakers were venting their blasphemous thoughts against God with very great boldness and determination. The minister sat down, full of grief. A young man declared that he did not believe in the existence of God, and dared Jehovah to destroy him then and there if there was such a God. The good man's heart was meditating how he ought to reply, but his tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of his mouth; and the infidel orator sat down amidst loud acclamations of admiration and approval. Our friend did not wish to be a craven, or to hold back in the day of battle, and therefore he was almost inclined to rise and speak, when a hale, burly man, who had passed the meridian of life, but who was still exceedingly vigorous, and seemed a strong, muscular clearer of the backwoods, rose and said, "I should like to speak if you will give me a hearing. I am not going to say anything about the topic which has been discussed by the orator who has just sat down; I am only going to tell you a fact: will you hear me?" "Yes, yes," they shouted; it was a free discussion, so they would hear him, especially as he was not going to controvert. "A week ago," he began, "I was working up yonder, on the river's bank, felling trees. You know the rapids down below. Well, while I was at my employment, at some little distance from them, I heard cries and shrieks, mingled with prayers to God for help. I ran down to the water's edge, for I guessed what was the matter. There I saw a young man, who could not manage his boat; the current was getting the mastery of him, and he was drifting down the stream, and ere long, unless someone had interposed, he would most certainly have been swept over the falls, and carried down to a dreadful death. I saw that young man kneel down in the boat, and pray to the Most High God, by the love of Christ, and by his precious blood, to save him. He confessed that he had been

an infidel; but said that, if he might but be delivered this once, he would declare his belief in God. I at once sprang into the river. My arms are not very weak, I think, though they are not so strong as they used to be. I managed to get into the boat, turned her round, brought her to the shore, and so I saved that young man's life; and that young man is the one who has just sat down, and who has been denying the existence of God, and daring the Most High to destroy him!" Of course, I used that story to show that it was an easy thing to brag and boast about holding infidel sentiments in a place of safety; but that, when men come into peril of their lives, then they talk in a very different fashion.

There is a capital story, which exemplifies the need of going up to the house of God, not merely to listen to the preacher, but to seek the Lord. A certain lady had gone to the communion in a Scotch church, and had greatly enjoyed the service. When she reached her home, she enquired who the preacher was, and she was informed that it was Mr. Ebenezer Erskine. The lady said that she would go again, the next Sabbath, to hear him. She went, but she was not profited in the least; the sermon did not seem to have any unction or power about it. She went to Mr. Erskine, and told him of her experience at the two services. "Ah! madam," said he, "the first Sabbath you came to meet the Lord Jesus Christ, and you had a blessing; but the second Sabbath you came to hear Ebenezer Erskine, and you had no blessing, and you had no right to expect any." You see, brethren, a preacher might talk to the people, in general terms, about coming to worship God, and not merely to hear the minister, yet no effect might be produced by his words, for there might not be anything sufficiently striking to remain in the memory; but after such an anecdote as this one about Mr. Erskine and the lady, who could forget the lesson that was intended to be taught?

Well now, supposing that you have exhausted all the illustrations to be found in current history, in local history, in ancient and modern history, and in religious history,—which I do not think you will do unless you are yourselves exhausted,—you may then turn to *natural history*, where you will find illustrations and anecdotes in great abundance; and you need never feel any qualms of conscience about using the facts of nature to illustrate the truths of Scripture, because there is a sound philosophy to support the use of such illustrations. It is a fact that can easily be accounted for, that people will more readily receive the truth of revelation if you link

it with some kindred truth in natural history, or anything that is visible to the eye, than if you give them a bare statement of the doctrine itself. Besides, there is this important fact that must not be forgotten, the God who is the Author of revelation, is also the Author of creation, and providence, and history, and everything else from which you ought to draw your illustrations. When you use natural history to illustrate the Scriptures, you are only explaining one of God's books by another volume that he has written.

It is just as if you had before you two works by one author, who had, in the first place, written a book for children; and then, in the second place, had prepared a volume of more profound instruction for persons of riper years, and higher culture. At times, when you found obscure and difficult passages in the work meant for the more advanced scholars, you would refer to the little book which was intended for the younger folk, and you would say, "We know that this means so-and-so, because that is how the matter is explained in the book for beginners." So creation, providence, and history, are all books which God has written for those to read who have eyes, written for those who have ears to hear his voice in them, written even for carnal men to read, that they may see something of God therein. But the other glorious Book is written for you who are taught of God, and made spiritual and holy. Oftentimes, by turning to the primer, you will get something out of that simple narrative which will elucidate and illustrate the more difficult classic, for that is what the Word of God is to you.

There is a certain type of thought which God has followed in all things. What he made with his Word has a similarity to the Word itself by which he made it; and the visible is the symbol of the invisible, because the same thought of God runs through it all. There is a touch of the divine finger in all that God has made; so that the things which are apparent to our senses have certain resemblances to the things which do not appear. That which can be seen, and tasted, and touched, and handled, is meant to be to us the outward and visible sign of a something which we find in the Word of God, and in our spiritual experience, which is the inward and the spiritual grace; so that there is nothing forced and unnatural in bringing nature to illustrate grace; it was ordained of God for that very purpose. Range over the whole of creation for your similes; do not confine yourself to any particular branch of natural history. The congregation of one very learned doctor complained that he gave them spiders continuously by way of illustration. It would be better to give the people a spider

or two occasionally, and then to vary the instruction by stories, and anecdotes, and similes, and metaphors drawn from geology, astronomy, botany, or any of the other sciences which will help to shed a side light upon the Scriptures.

If you keep your eyes open, you will not see even a dog following his master, nor a mouse peeping up from his hole, nor will you hear even a gentle scratching behind the wainscot without getting something to weave into your sermons if your faculties are all on the alert. When you go home to-night, and sit by your fireside, you ought not to be able to take up your domestic cat without finding that which will furnish you with an illustration. How soft are pussy's pads, and yet, in a moment, if she is angered, how sharp will be her claws! How like to temptation, soft and gentle when first it cometh to us, but how deadly, how damnable the wounds it causeth ere long!

I recollect using, with very considerable effect in a sermon in the Tabernacle, an incident that occurred in my own garden. There was a dog which was in the habit of coming through the fence, and scratching in my flower-beds, to the manifest spoiling of the gardener's toil and temper. Walking in the garden, one Saturday afternoon, and preparing my sermon for the following day, I saw the four-footed creature,—rather a scurvy specimen, by-the-by,—and having a walking-stick in my hand, I threw it at him with all my might, at the same time giving him some good advice about going home. Now, what should my canine friend do but turn round, pick up the stick in his mouth, and bring it, and lay it down at my feet, wagging his tail all the while in expectation of my thanks and kind words? Of course, you do not suppose that I kicked him, or threw the stick at him any more. I felt quite ashamed of myself, and I told him that he was welcome to stay as long as he liked, and to come as often as he pleased. There was an instance of the power of non-resistance, submission, patience, and trust, in overcoming even righteous anger. I used that illustration in preaching the next day, and I did not feel that I had at all degraded myself by telling the story.

Most of us have read Alphonse Karr's book, *A Tour round my Garden*. Why does not somebody write *A Tour round my Dining-table*, or, *A Tour round my Kitchen*? I believe a most interesting volume of the kind might be written by any man who had his eyes open to see the analogies of nature. I remember that, one day, when I lived in Cambridge, I wanted a sermon very badly; and I could not fix upon a subject, when, all at once, I noticed

a number of birds on the slates of the opposite house. As I looked closely at them, I saw that there was a canary, which had escaped from somebody's house, and a lot of sparrows had surrounded it, and kept pecking at it. There was my text at once: "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her."

Once more, brethren, if you cannot find illustrations in natural history, or any of the other histories I have mentioned, *find them anywhere*. Anything that occurs around you, if you have but brains in your head, will be of service to you; but if you are really to interest and profit your congregations, you will need to keep your eyes open, and to use all the powers with which the Lord has endowed you. If you do so, you will find that, in simply walking through the streets, something or other will suggest a passage of Scripture, or will help you, when you have chosen your text, to open it up to the people so as really to arrest their attention, and convey the truth to their minds and hearts.

For instance, the snow to-day covered all the ground, and the black soil looked fair and white. It is thus with some men under transient reformatations; they look as holy, and as heavenly, and as pure as though they were saints; but when the sun of trial arises, and a little heat of temptation cometh upon them, how soon do they reveal their true blackness, and all their surface goodness melteth away!

The whole world is hung round by God with pictures; and the preacher has only to take them down, one by one, and hold them up before his congregation, and he will be sure to enlist their interest in the subject he is seeking to illustrate. But he must have his own eyes open, or he will not see these pictures. Solomon said, "The wise man's eyes are in his head," and addressing such a man, he wrote, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." Why does he speak of seeing with the eyelids? I think he means that the eyelids are to shut in what the eyes have perceived. You know that there is all the difference in the world between a man with eyes and one with no eyes. One sits down by a stream, and sees much to interest and instruct him; but another, at the same place, is like the gentleman of whom Wordsworth wrote,—

"A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

If you find any difficulty in illustrating your subject, I should strongly recommend you to *try to teach children* whenever you can get an opportunity of doing so. I do not know a better way of schooling your own mind to the use of illustrations than frequently to take a class in the Sunday-school, or to give addresses to the scholars as often as you can ; because, if you do not illustrate *there*, you will have your lesson or your address illustrated for you very strikingly. You will find that the children will do it by their general worry and inattention, or by their talk and play. I used to have a class of boys when I was a Sunday-school teacher, and if I was ever a little dull, they began to make wheels of themselves, twisting round on the forms on which they sat. That was a very plain intimation to me that I must give them an illustration or an anecdote ; and I learned to tell stories partly by being obliged to tell them. One boy, whom I had in the class, used to say to me, "This is very dull, teacher ; can't you pitch us a yarn ?" Of course he was a naughty boy, and you may suppose that he went to the bad when he grew up, though I am not at all sure that he did ; but I used to try and pitch him the yarn that he wanted in order to get his attention again. And I dare say that some of our hearers, if they were allowed to speak out during the sermon, would ask us to pitch them a yarn, that is, to give them something to interest them. I believe that one of the best things you can do to teach either the old or the young is to give them plenty of anecdotes and illustrations.

I think it would be very useful to some of you who are not yet adepts at the art of illustration if you were to *read books in which there is an abundance of metaphor, simile, and emblem*. I am not going fully into that subject on this occasion, because this lecture is only preliminary to the next two that I hope to deliver, in which I will try to give you a list of cyclopædies of anecdotes and illustrations, and books of fables, emblems, and parables ; but I advise you to study such works as Gurnall's *Christian in Complete Armour*, or Matthew Henry's *Commentary*, with the distinct view of noticing all the illustrations, emblems, metaphors, and similes that you can find. I should even select *non-comparisons* ; I like Keach's *Metaphors* where he points out the disparity between the type and the Anti-type. Sometimes, the contrasts between different persons or objects will be as instructive as their resemblances.

When you have read the book once, and tried to mark all the figures, go through it again, and note all the illustrations you

missed in your first reading. You will probably have missed many; and you will be surprised to find that there are *illustrations even in the words themselves*. How frequently a word is itself a picture! Some of the most expressive words that are found in human language are like rich gems, which have passed before your eye very often, but you have not had time to handle or to value them. In your second examination of the book, you will notice, perhaps, what eluded you the first time, and you will find many illustrations which are merely hinted at, instead of being given at length. Do as I have recommended with a great many books. Get copies that you can afford to mark with a coloured pencil, so that you will be sure to see the illustrations readily; or put them down in one of your note-books.

I am sure that those brethren who begin early to keep a record of such things act wisely. The commonplace-books of the old Puritans were invaluable to them. They would never have been able to have compiled such marvellous works as they did if they had not been careful in collecting and arranging their matter under different heads; and thus, all that they had ever read upon any subject was embalmed and preserved, and they could readily refer to any point that they might require, and refresh their memories, and verify their quotations. Some of us, who are very busy, may be excused from that task; we must do the best we can, but some of you, who go to smaller charges, in the country especially, ought to keep a commonplace-book, or else I am afraid you will get to be very commonplace yourselves.

Your selection of similes, metaphors, parables, and emblems will not be complete unless you also *search the Scriptures to find the illustrations that are recorded there*. Biblical allusions are the most effective methods of illustrating and enforcing the truths of the gospel; and the preacher who is familiar with his Bible will never be at a loss for an instance of that which "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The Lord must have meant us thus to use his Word, otherwise he would not have given us, in the Old Testament, such a number of types and symbols of truths to be afterwards more fully revealed under the gospel dispensation.

Such a collection of illustrations as I have suggested will come very handy to you in future days, and you will be reminded, by the comparisons and figures used by others, to make comparisons and figures for yourself. Familiarity with anything makes us *au fait* at it; we can learn to do almost anything by practice. I

suppose that I could, by degrees, learn to make a tub if I spent my time with a man engaged in that business. I should know how to put the staves and the hoops if I stayed long enough in the cooper's yard ; and I have no doubt that any of you could learn anything you desired provided you had sufficient time and opportunity. So, if you search for illustrations, you will learn to make them for yourselves.

That brings me to my last point. I began this lecture by warning you against the practice of making anecdotes ; I close it by advising you often to *set yourself the task of making illustrations*. Try to make comparisons from the things round about you. I think it would be well, sometimes, to shut the door of your study, and say to yourself, "I will not go out of this room until I have made at least half-a-dozen good illustrations." The Chinese say that the intellect lies in the stomach, and that the affections are there, too. I think they are right on the latter point, because, you know, if you are ever very fond of anybody,—your wife, for instance,—you say that you could eat her ; and you also say that such and such a person is very sweet. So, too, the intellect may lie in the stomach ; and consequently, when you have been shut in for two or three hours, and begin to want your dinner or tea, you may be quickened into the making of the six illustrations I have mentioned as a minimum. Your study would be a veritable prison if you could not make as many useful comparisons as that from the different objects in the room. I should say that a prison itself would furnish suggestions for making many metaphors. I do not wish you to go to prison for that purpose ; but if you ever do get there, you ought to be able to learn how to preach in an interesting manner upon such a passage as this,—“Bring my soul out of prison ;” or this, “He was there in the prison. But the Lord was with Joseph.”

If you cannot get your brains to work in the house, you might take a walk, and say to yourself, “I will wander over the fields, or I will get into the garden, or I will stroll in the wood, and see if I cannot find some illustration or other. You might even go and look in at a shop-window, and see if there are not some illustrations to be discovered there. Or you might stand still a little while, and hear what people say as they go by ; or stop where there is a little knot of idlers, and try to hear what they are talking about, and see what symbol you can make out of it. You should also spend as much time as you can visiting the sick ; that

will be a most profitable thing to do, for in that sacred service you will have many opportunities of getting illustrations from the tried children of God as you hear their varied experiences. It is wonderful what pages of a new cyclopædia of illustrative teaching you might find written out with indelible ink if you went visiting the sick, or even in talking with children. Many of them will say things that you will be able to quote with good effect in your sermons. At any rate, do make up your mind that you will attract and interest the people by the way in which you set the gospel before them. Half the battle lies in making the attempt, in coming to this determined resolution, "God helping me, I will teach the people by parables, by similes, by illustrations, by anything that will be helpful to them; and I will seek to be a thoroughly interesting preacher of the Word."

I earnestly hope you will practise the art of making illustrations. I will try to prepare a little set of exercises for you to do week by week. I shall give you some subject, and some object, between which there is a likeness; and I shall get you to try to see the resemblance, and to find out what comparisons can be instituted between them. I shall also, if I can, give you some subject without an object, and then say to you, "Illustrate that; tell us, for instance, what virtue is like." Or, sometimes, I may give you the object without the subject, thus,— "A diamond; how will you use that as an illustration?" Then, sometimes, I may give you neither the subject nor the object, but just say, "Bring me an illustration." I think we might, in this way, make a set of exercises which would be very useful to you all.

The way to get a mind worth having is to get one well stored with things worth keeping. Of course, the man who has the most illustrations in his head, will be the one who will use the most illustrations in his discourses. There are some preachers who have the bump of illustration fully developed; they are sure to illustrate their subject, they cannot help it. There are some men who always see "likes"; they catch a comparison long before others see it. If any of you say that you are not good at illustrating, I reply, "My brother, you must try to grow horns if you have not any on your head." You may never be able to develop any vast amount of imagination or fancy if you do not possess it at the first,—just as it is hard to make a cheese out of a millstone,—but by diligent attention to this matter, you may improve upon what you now are. I do believe that some fellows have a depression in their craniums where there ought to be a bump. I knew a young man,

who tried hard to get into this College; but he never saw how to join things together unless he tied them by their tails. He brought out a book; and when I read it, I found at once that it was full of my stories and illustrations; that is to say, every illustration or story in the book was one that I had used, but there was not one of them that was related as it ought to have been. This man had so told the story that it was not there at all; the very point which I had brought out he had carefully omitted, and every bit of it was told correctly except the one thing that was the essence of the whole. Of course, I was glad that I did not have that brother in the College; he might have been an ornament to us by his deficiencies, but we can do without such ornaments, indeed, we have had enough of them already.

Finally, dear brethren, do try with all your might to get the power to see a parable, a simile, an illustration, wherever it is to be seen; for to a great extent this is one of the most important qualifications of the man who is to be a public speaker, and especially of the man who is to be an efficient preacher of the gospel of Christ. If the Lord Jesus made such frequent use of parables, it must be right for us to do the same.

LECTURE V.

Cyclopædias of Anecdotes and Illustrations.

IN my last lecture, I promised to give you a list of cyclopædias of anecdotes and illustrations, so far as they are at present known to me; and I hope, on another occasion, to tell you about books that contain fables, emblems, and parables. For this afternoon, we must confine our attention to collections of anecdotes and illustrations which have been compiled specially for the use of ministers and Christian workers in general.

I do not know what book of illustrations the apostle Paul used. He had some books, for he wrote to Timothy, "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." The books may have been various Latin and Greek works that Paul needed for reference, and the parchments were, possibly, the original manuscripts of his epistles; but, whatever they were, he did not like to lose them, so he asked his son Timothy to bring them to him. The parchments may have been his notes of illustrations that he had jotted down in his journeyings, or his commonplace-book, such as I have advised you all to make. At all events, whatever the earliest preachers had, we know that books of illustrations, metaphors, and similes, have been issued for centuries. Those of you who can read Latin easily, may find a great store of such works. While I was arranging the material for this lecture, I received a catalogue of nearly three hundred books of emblems, and similar publications, printed in Latin, French, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, and German; but any man who wished to make a collection of such works would need more money than usually falls to the lot of Baptist pastors.

For us poor English people, the first cyclopædia that I should recommend is SPENCER'S *Things New and Old*. This is a book, you know, which was scarcely purchasable till Mr. Dickinson reprinted

it (after revision by Rev. J. G. Pilkington, M.A.), bound up with CAWDRAÏ'S *Similes*, in a very bulky volume of 1,112 pages. The original title-page explains the character of the work, so I will read the description in full, though it is rather long:—*Things New and Old; or, a Storehouse of Similes, Sentences, Allegories, Apophthegms, Apologues, Adages, Divine, Moral, Political, etc.,—with their several applications. Collected and Observed from the Writings and Sayings of the Learned in All Ages to the Present. By John Spencer, a Lover of Learning and Learned Men. With Preface by Thomas Fuller.* This book, published in 1658, was compiled by a man who was librarian at Sion College more than two centuries ago. I find that Spencer was elected librarian September 2, 1634, and with certain interruptions, during which he was suspended or discharged, and then re-appointed, he occupied the post till his death in 1680. Being for such a long period in charge of that very remarkable collection of valuable books, he made extracts from them, and thus prepared this volume. It was a very happy circumstance for me that John Spencer should have happened to be the librarian of that institution, and that he should have compiled so good a book; for I have always been able to make good use of it.

Years ago, I recommended this volume to the students, and several of them have since told me that they thought I made a mistake in doing so. They bought the book on my recommendation, but they did not care for it, and they have sold it. I ought to be impressed by their very valuable opinions; but I am not, for I like Spencer still. Some of his illustrations are very queer, cramped, and antique; and if a man does not take the trouble to trim and shape them into more modern form, he cannot use them. They require labour to make them of service; but, when I praised the book, I thought that, if a sensible man could get hold of even the tail of an illustration or anecdote, it would be enough for him to make something out of it for himself; and therefore I recommended Spencer. On looking over the volume again, I must admit that there are many things in it that are not now usable; but I am also quite certain that, to me, it has been a great thought-breeding book. It has often started me with an illustration that I should never else have thought of; therefore I have good reason to speak well of it. I opened my volume again this morning, just to see whether I was mistaken or not, because I have great faith in the judgment of all the students who go out of this College; and, on further examination and

consideration, I have come to the conclusion that I was right in my first estimate of the work.

Let me read to you No. XI., on page 4 :—

AFFLICTION FROM GOD IS FOR HIS CHILDREN'S GOOD.

"A tender-hearted father, walking with his little son, I suppose in the City, when he perceives him gaze up and down, and wander from him, withdraws himself behind some pillar, or hides himself in some corner of the street, not that he means to lose him, but to make him cry and seek after him, and keep closer to him afterwards ; so doth our heavenly Father with us. He correcteth every son whom he loveth ; he hides himself, and, as it were, pulls in the beams of his gracious favour for a time, when we are rambling about in our thoughts, and roving in our imaginations ; but it is to make us cry after him the louder, and keep closer to him for the time to come, and walk more circumspectly than ever we did before."

I think that is a very pretty illustration. You have often seen a parent or a nurse thus act with the children. In like manner, God sometimes hides himself from us for a while that we may be made to cling the more closely to him afterwards.

Here is another of Spencer's illustrations, No. XVII., on the next page to the one I just gave you :—

THE DIFFERENCE BETWIXT SPIRITUAL AND CARNAL PRAYERS, IN RESPECT OF ANSWER.

"Children shoot arrows on purpose to lose them, and never so much as look where they light ; but men, when they shoot, aim at the mark, and go after the arrow, to see how near it falls. So, wicked, carnal men, when they have *said*, not made, their prayers to Almighty God, it is but *opus operatum* ; they have no more regard of them. But God's children, when they, upon the bended knees of their souls, dart out their prayers, when they pour out their requests unto him, they look after their prayers, eye them up into heaven, observe how God entertains them, and wait for a happy return at his good will and pleasure."

Therein you have a true idea of prayer, as the psalmist puts it in Psalm v. 3 : "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." That would be a good text for you to preach from on Sunday. The idea is that the suppliant is like a man with a bow and arrow, taking aim, directing his prayer unto God, and then looking up to see where it goes, and watching also to see what answer is coming down in response to his supplication

Take another illustration from the same page :—

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE AND MAN'S KNOWLEDGE, THE DIFFERENCE IN VIEWING THINGS.

"In a sheet almanack, a man may, *uno intuitu* (at one view), see all the months in the year, both past and to come ; but in a book almanack,

as he turneth to one month so he turneth from another, and can but look only on the present. This is the true difference betwixt the knowledge of God and man. He looketh in one instant of time to things past, present, and future ; but the knowledge of man reacheth only to a few things past and present, but knoweth nothing at all of things that are to come. That is God's prerogative so to do, and a piece of learning too high for any mortal man to attain unto."

That seems to me to be a beautiful picture, looking on the whole year at once as on a sheet almanack, instead of seeing only a page at a time as in a book almanack. Thus, to God's all-seeing eye, events, past, present, and to come, all stand out clearly revealed, while our restricted vision perceives but little of the past and present, and nothing of the future.

To No. XXIII., Spencer prefixes this title, "*The Danger of Trusting to Worldly Greatness in Time of Distress*," and upon this subject he says :—

"As a traveller in a storm that, for shelter against the weather, steppeth out of the way, betaketh him to a fair spread oak, standeth under the boughs, with his back close to the body of it, and findeth good relief thereby for the space of some time, till at length cometh a sudden gust of wind, that teareth down a main arm of it, which, falling upon the poor traveller, either maimeth or mischieveth him that resorted to it for succour ; thus falleth it out with not a few, meeting in the world with many troubles, and with manifold vexations, they step aside out of their own way, and too often out of God's, to get under the wing of some great one, and gain, it may be, some aid and shelter thereby for a season, but after a while that great one himself, coming down headlong, and falling from his former height of favour and honour, they are also called in question, and so fall together with him, that might otherwise have stood long enough on their own legs, if they had not trusted to such an arm of flesh, such a broken staff that deceived them."

Well, brethren, you need not use that metaphor exactly as Spencer does ; though I think he turns it to good account. Many a man does go under a tree for shelter from the storm, and then a bough of that tree falls on him to his injury. This would be a good illustration of Isaiah xxx. 1—3 : "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me ; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin : that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth ; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt ! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion."

This book, *Things New and Old*, is almost full of good things

such as I have read to you. I have taken them just as my eye caught them ; I have not attempted to make a selection from the 2,283 illustrations that are here given. Therefore, I still persist in recommending this work to you ; and I hope it will prove as helpful to you as it has long been to me.

CAWDRAY is not so good as Spencer by a long way ; his illustrative extracts are of a very different class. You cannot get Spencer without Cawdray, as the two are bound together ; and, therefore, though he is not so useful as Spencer, you must take him as being given into the bargain. His book was printed in 1609 ; its full title is :—*A Treasury ; or, Storehouse of Similes both Pleasant, Delightful, and Profitable, for all Estates of Men in General. Newly-collected into Heads and Commonplaces. By Robert Cawdray.* Here is a sample of his selections :—

ADVERSITY BETTERETH THE GODLY, BUT MAKETH THE WICKED WORSE.

“ Even as full wheat in the ear falleth out with the least motion of the sheaf, but that which is somewhat shrunk more hardly leaveth the husk, while that which is altogether shrunk will rather go to the chaff than go out of the ear ; so, a sincere-hearted Christian, with the least affliction, leaveth his sin, and flieth to God. The weaker Christian more hardly doth the same ; but the apostate will rather burn with unquenchable fire than forsake his beloved sin, that so he may turn to God.”

I think that is a very good illustration, because every thresher must know that there is this difference between the grains of wheat, and there certainly is such a contrast as Cawdray points out between the effect of affliction upon believers and the ungodly.

Another pretty illustration is the one numbered XII. :—

AFFLICTION.

“ As a piece of brass, being stricken with a hammer upon the anvil or stithy, breaketh, and withal maketh a sharp and irksome noise ; so, when a hypocrite cometh betwixt the anvil and the hammer of troubles and affliction, he breaketh with impatience, he murmurcth, crieth out, and lamenteth in blasphemies against God.”

Now, if I am examining a book, I do not mind if I have to read twenty pages before I find one illustration that I can use ; I feel rewarded when I meet with that one, and you must do the same, brethren. Books of illustration are very much like hymn-books, and books of tunes. There is not a hymn-book which you ever think of singing through from beginning to end. There is not a book of tunes extant of which anybody ever sings more than one in three ;

even in a collection like Mr. Sankey's, you would not want to sing all the pieces. Well, so is it with books of illustrations. Yet, though you do not sing all the hymns or tunes in any book, somebody else prefers those which you do not sing, and so the whole selection may be useful to someone or other. In like manner, you might say of any cyclopædia of illustrations, "I could only use twenty of the metaphors here;" but somebody else, who was less wise than you, might be able to utilize forty; while another preacher, who had not half as many brains as you had, managed to secure fifty; and there might even be some brethren who could find a hundred illustrations where you very clever gentlemen only saw twenty. There is no harm in having a rather larger supply than you yourself need; for what you do not use another preacher may.

Here is another of Cawdray's similes:—

A REGENERATE MAN FALLETH NOT FINALLY.

"As with a man in travelling from Berwick to London, it may be that, now and then, he doth go amiss, and out of his way, but he speedily returns to the way again, and his course generally shall be right; even so, it is the property of the regenerate man to walk according to the Spirit, which does not mean now and then to make a step forward, but to keep his ordinary course in the way of godliness."

Well, brethren, we have probably found that to be true in our own case; if we have ever gone aside from the right path, I trust that we have speedily returned to the way of holiness.

I think this must suffice for SPENCER'S *Things New and Old*, and CAWDRAY'S *Similes*, published by Mr. Dickinson.

Before Mr. Dickinson reprinted this book, as Spencer's volume was extremely dear, and not obtainable by the general public, a MR. SALTER brought out a sort of hash of Spencer, with some modern illustrations intermingled with the older extracts. The title that he gave to his work was, *The Book of Illustrations; or, Scripture Truths Exhibited by the Aid of Similes, Original and Selected. By the Rev. H. G. Salter, A.M., Curate and Lecturer of Glastonbury.* It was published by Messrs. Hatchard and Son. I see that, in 1858, I wrote in my copy, "A right good book, but not so good as precious old Spencer." This worthy clergyman, in making his book, imagined himself to be walking in an untrodden path, and in attempting the work of collecting metaphors, he thought he should get very little reward. He considered that it required no small degree of moral courage to undertake such a task, because, as he said:—"It is safer to follow others. The

fact that the public are not in possession of some work of this nature, would discourage most men; and the enquiry, *why it was so*, would present an obstacle at the beginning. But the request of some, eminent in judgment, to publish on the subject, which originated the idea, strengthened by the unanimous approval of those whom I consulted, overcame my hesitation. Indeed, the desire to possess a full collection of illustrations, I found, was very general with the clergy to whom it was mentioned.

"But another and a greater discouragement will be found in the subject-matter. Its materials cannot be subjected to the just decisions of Reason, but the capricious judge to be appealed to is Taste. Whether any particular illustration should be admitted or rejected, can hardly be decided by Reason. There are no fixed principles to try it by; it will be liked or disliked often without any assignable grounds. As our tastes and fancies vary, so will be our approval or otherwise. So various is the character of men's minds, that it would be impossible to obtain a uniform judgment. Some illustrations, of singular point and beauty, might secure universal approval; but this excellence cannot be expected to belong to illustrations in general, any more than to other subjects. Here, then, we must surrender at discretion to the taste of our judge. In general, the standard of Taste has been tolerably adjusted. Here it is otherwise."

Mr. Salter made a very good index to his book, and he used scarcely anything except Spencer; but what he did use that was not Spencer's was well chosen, and selected from writers of considerable repute. There are many good stories in the volume. Here is one which I have no doubt you know, but which, possibly, you may never have seen used in this way:—

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Sir James Thornhill was the person who painted the inside of the cupola of St. Paul's, London. After having finished one of the compartments, he stepped back gradually, to see how it would look at a distance. He receded so far (still keeping his eye intently fixed on the painting), that he had gone almost to the very edge of the scaffolding without perceiving it; had he continued to retire, half a minute more would have completed his destruction, and he must have fallen to the pavement underneath. A person present, who saw the danger the great artist was in, had the happy presence of mind to suddenly snap up one of the brushes, and spoil his painting by rubbing it over. Sir James, transported with rage, sprang forward to save the remainder of the piece; but his anger was soon turned into thanks, when the person said to him, 'Sir, by spoiling the painting, I have saved the life of the painter. You had advanced to the extremity of the scaffold without

knowing it. Had I called out to you to apprise you of your danger, you would naturally have turned to look behind you, and the surprise of finding yourself in such a dreadful situation would have made you fall indeed. I had, therefore, no other method of saving you but by acting as I did.'

"Similar, if I may so speak, is the method of God's dealing with his people. We are all naturally fond of our own legal performances. We admire them to our ruin; unless the Holy Spirit retrieve us from our folly. This he does by marring, as it were, our best works; by showing us their insufficiency to justify us before God. When we are truly taught of God, we thank him for his grace instead of being angry at having our idols defaced. The only way by which we are saved from everlasting destruction, is by being made to see that 'by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.'"

I suppose that our ministerial fathers, two generations ago, used to be very well satisfied with BUCK's *Anecdotes*. The full title of the book is, *Anecdotes, Religious, Moral, and Entertaining; Alphabetically Arranged, and Interspersed with a Variety of Useful Observations. Selected by the late Rev. Charles Buck*. It was published by Messrs. Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans. The date of my copy is 1842, and the work had at that time reached the tenth edition; so I judge that it had a good long run. I do not see very much in the anecdotes; and I expect the reason why they do not particularly impress me now is that I know most of them by heart. If the stories were just a little older, they would be almost as useful as if they were new; but they have reached that period in which they are apt to be considered stale. Still, there are among them some anecdotes that have not been used more than once a week lately, and therefore can be brought out again. Here is an old story which, I suppose, you have often heard:—

THE WORLD A SEA.

"A friend of the famous Mr. J. Dod being raised from a mean estate to much worldly greatness, Mr. Dod sent him word that this was but like going out of a boat into a ship; and he should remember that, while he was in the world he was still on the sea. Let us, then, wisely prepare for difficulties, and learn to cast all our cares on him who holds the winds in his fists, who stills the waves of the sea, and who has promised to guide his people safe into the haven of rest."

Here is an anecdote, rather clumsily told, about—

A PRECOCIOUS BOY.

"A child, six years of age, being introduced into company for his extraordinary abilities, was asked, by a dignified clergyman, 'where God

was?' with the proffer of an orange. 'Tell me,' replied the boy, 'where he is not, and I will give you two.'"

Well, there are many stories as good as these two; and possibly some of them may be quite new to your congregations. If you can obtain a copy of this book, it may be worth your while to secure it; indeed, you should make it a rule that, whenever you see books of anecdotes to be sold cheaply, you should add them to your library if you can spare the money, for they are among the things that are indispensable to you.

The next good man who did much to furnish ministers with illustrations was MR. JOHN WHITECROSS. Whitecross's *Anecdotes* are always to be had at a reasonable price. There are three volumes of them; their full titles are, *Anecdotes Illustrative of A Select Passage in Each Chapter of the Old Testament*; *Anecdotes Illustrative of Select Passages in each Chapter of the New Testament*; and *Anecdotes Illustrative of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism*. They were published in Edinburgh by Messrs. Oliphant and Co., and in London by Messrs. Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

The plan of arrangement in Whitecross's *Anecdotes* differs from the method adopted in the books I have previously mentioned, for the stories are put under selected passages of Scripture instead of under subjects or topics. In the Old Testament, for instance, Mr. Whitecross begins with Genesis, and he gives one anecdote illustrating verse sixteen of the first chapter of that Book, another on verse three of the second chapter, another on verse fifteen of the third chapter, and so on; some of the anecdotes being appropriate to the text, and some of them not so suitable. Here is an anecdote that is given as an illustration of Genesis viii. 22:—

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

"A minister, going to church one Lord's-day morning, when the weather was extremely cold and stormy, was overtaken by one of his neighbours, who, shivering, said to him, 'It's very cold, sir.' 'Oh!' replied the minister, 'God is as good as his word still.' The other started at his remark, not apprehending his drift, or what he referred to; and asked him what he meant. 'Mean?' replied he, 'why, he promised, above three thousand years ago, and still he makes his word good, that while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, shall not cease.'"

Well, that is an interesting anecdote to tell on a wintry Sabbath morning; but there is not much in it. Neither are most of the anecdotes given in these books very remarkable; but many of them

may be useful. Do not, however, say that the incidents happened to you, as I have known some preachers do. Why, I actually heard, not long ago, of a minister, who said that a certain thing occurred to him the other day, and yet I told the original story twenty years ago! When I related it, I said that it had been my experience the other day, and I believed it was so; but after hearing that this man says it happened to him, it makes me question whether it really did occur to me at all. I think it is a great pity for a preacher, or any speaker, to try to make a story appear interesting by saying that the incident related happened to him, when it really did not. Scrupulous truthfulness should always characterize every one who stands up to proclaim the truth of God.

Here is a good story, and there are others of a similar character, which are both valuable and usable. This is intended to illustrate the fourth verse of the one hundred and thirtieth Psalm:—

“There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”

“One Mr. Davies, a young man, being under religious impressions, opened his mind to Dr. Owen. In the course of conversation, Dr. Owen said, ‘Young man, pray, in what manner do you think to go to God?’ Mr. Davies replied, ‘Through the Mediator, sir.’ ‘That is easily said,’ observed Dr. Owen; ‘but I assure you, it is another thing to go to God through the Mediator, than many who make use of the expression are aware of. I myself preached some years, while I had but very little, if any, acquaintance with access to God through Christ, until the Lord was pleased to visit me with a sore affliction, by which I was brought to the brink of the grave, and under which my mind was filled with horror; but God was graciously pleased to relieve my soul by a powerful application of Psalm cxxx. 4 “But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” From this text I received special light, peace, and comfort, in drawing near to God through the Mediator; and on this text I preached immediately after my recovery.’ Perhaps to this exercise of mind we owe his excellent exposition of this Psalm.”

There are also, in Whitecross’s Anecdotes, some very beautiful experimental pieces from the great divines; and therefore I recommend you to purchase them if you can.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY published *twelve small volumes of anecdotes*, at one and fourpence each. I suppose, therefore, you can buy them for one shilling each. They should not be reckoned dear at that price, and each volume ought to supply you with many anecdotes. If you only pick one or two pearls out of each of these oyster-shells, it will be worth all you pay for it. The anecdotes in these books are arranged according to topics, each

volume being devoted to one subject:—Admonitions, Christian Conduct, Christian Graces, Christian Ministers, Christian Missions, Holy Scriptures, Miscellaneous, Providence, Religious Tracts, Social Life, Sunday Schools, and The Young. The copy which I have in my hand is on the Holy Scriptures. I will only detain you with one extract; but I know that there is quite a good selection of anecdotes here, so that, if you had to speak at a Bible Society meeting in the country, this book would be sure to furnish you with most of the materials for a speech. This is the story that I had noted to read to you from this volume:—

FATHER FULGENTIO.

“Father Fulgentio, the friend and biographer of the celebrated Paul Sarpi, both of them secret friends of religious reformation, was once preaching upon Pilate’s question, ‘What is truth?’ when he told the audience that he had, at last, after many searches, found it out; and, holding forth a New Testament, said, ‘Here it is, my friends;’ but added sorrowfully, as he returned it to his pocket, ‘It is a sealed book!’ It has since been the glory of the Reformation to break the seal which priestcraft had imposed upon it, and to lay its blessed treasures open to mankind.”

There are some anecdotes in the other volumes which are well worth telling; here is one from the collection entitled Social Life:—

MARSHAL DE BASSOMPTRE.

“The Marshal de Bassompstre said to one of his officers, ‘How old are you?’ ‘I cannot tell exactly,’ said the captain; ‘but I am either thirty-eight or forty-eight.’ ‘How is it,’ asked the marshal, ‘that you are so ignorant in a concern that every person finds pleasure in knowing?’ ‘Why,’ said the captain, ‘I keep an exact account of my rents, and what is owing to me, for fear of being cheated; but I never trouble my head about my years, because nobody can rob me of them!’

“Poor man! did he not know that he was robbed of his precious time every day and every hour? It is gone, too, beyond recovery. If a thief steals our money, it is possible we may get it again; but time that is past never returns: life that is wasted is gone for ever. Learn, then, to turn to account every passing hour.”

I cannot very strongly recommend the twelve volumes, as a whole; still, a shilling is not much to pay for such a store of stories as each of these little books contains, so you will do well to add them to your library.

The book of all books of anecdotes is ARVINE’S *Cyclopædia of Moral and Religious Anecdotes: a Collection of nearly Three Thousand Facts, Incidents, Narratives, Examples, and Testimonies.*

I took in my copy of Arvine, many years ago, from the Primitive Methodists, who brought it out in sixpenny numbers. The edition corrected and authorized by Mr. Arvine is the one edited by REV. JOHN FLESHIER, and published by Mr. George Lamb, Sutton Street, London, E. Arvine's work is really a perfect cyclopædia. After using it for many years, I am still of opinion that scarcely anything better in the way of a collection of anecdotes has come out since. The arrangement and classification of the subjects are excellent, and the copious topical and textual indexes are admirable. You, gentlemen, who are very enthusiastic teetotallers, will find this book exactly to your taste; in parts, it is as dry as a furnace, and some of the anecdotes are sufficiently strong for the most ardent abstainer. It is a capital book for all that; and I should like, for once, to read a volume in which the evils of intemperance are overdrawn. There is a book, called *The Devil's Chain*, written by Mr. Edward Jenkins, M.P., the author of *Ginx's Baby*; but terrible as are the descriptions in that book, the dreadful doings of drink are not exaggerated. When I was a boy, I went to Madame Tussaud's, and paid sixpence extra to go into the chamber of horrors; but I always thought that I had not my full sixpennyworth; but when I read *The Devil's Chain*, I had horrors enough there. I do not think anyone could pourtray all the evils of intemperance, or of the drink system. This book of Arvine's is none the worse, but all the better, for the anecdotes about drunkenness, for those of you who do not want to use these wonderful stories about intemperance, can let them alone; and you who do need them for your temperance addresses, can find plenty of them here.

I suppose that most of you are well acquainted with Arvine; but I will give you two of his anecdotes, one showing the doctrinal position of the editor, and the other giving rather an amusing description of how a preacher practically "improved the opportunity" of occupying the pulpit of a brother minister:—

RIDDLE'S DYING TESTIMONY.

"Mr. Edward Riddle, an aged Christian in Hull, remarked, a few days before his death, to one who was present, 'Some may suppose that a person at my time of life, and after so long making a profession of religion, has nothing to do but to die and go to heaven; but I find that I have as much need to go to God through Christ, as a sinner, at the last hour as at the beginning. The blood of Christ, the death of Christ, his victory and fulness, are my only ground of faith, hope, and confidence; there is the same need of him to be the Finisher of my faith as there was for him to be the Author of it.'"

The editor inserts the following foot-note to the paragraph about going to God as a sinner; but you and I, brethren, will agree with good old Mr. Riddle:—

"This and similar views are not ours: we believe that Christians may live without sin; still, other people have as much right to their belief as we have to ours."

THE PULPIT WINDOW AND CUSHION REPAIRED.

"The Rev. Zabeliel Adams at one time exchanged with a neighbouring minister,—a mild, inoffensive man,—who, knowing the peculiar bluntness of his friend's character, said to him, 'You will find some panes of glass broken in the pulpit window, and possibly you may suffer from the cold. The cushion, too, is in a bad condition; but I beg of you not to say anything to my people on the subject; they are poor,' etc. 'Oh, no! Oh, no!' said Mr. Adams; but ere he left home, he filled a bag with rags, and took it with him. When he had been in the pulpit a short time, feeling somewhat incommoded by the too free circulation of the air, he deliberately took from the bag a handful of rags, and stuffed them into the window. Towards the close of the discourse, which was more or less upon the duties of a people towards their minister, he became very animated, and purposely brought down both fists upon the pulpit cushions, with a tremendous force. The feathers flew in all directions, and the cushion became nearly featherless. He instantly checked the current of his thoughts, and simply exclaimed, 'Why, how these feathers fly!' and then proceeded. He had fulfilled his promise of not addressing the Society on the subject; but he had taught the members a lesson not to be misunderstood. On the next Sabbath, the window and cushion were found in excellent repair."

Messrs. Gould and Lincoln, Boston, U.S.A., published another cyclopædia of Arvine's, which I do not think has been reprinted in England. It contains 3,040 illustrations, and is entitled: *A Cyclopædia of Anecdotes of Literature and the Fine Arts; Containing a Copious and Choice Selection of Anecdotes of the Various Forms of Literature, of the Arts, of Architecture, Engravings, Music, Poetry, Painting, and Sculpture, and of the Most Celebrated Literary Characters and Artists of Different Countries and Ages, etc. By Kazlitt Arvine, A.M.* You should get it if you can.

DR. CHEEVER brought out a book of anecdotes, but all, or nearly all of them, were taken from Arvine. Do not buy Cheever if you have Arvine, because Cheever is simply a hashing-up of the cold cabbage of Arvine. What a good thing it is for those who are preparing books of anecdotes to-day that so many have been published before! This saves them the trouble of making illustrations, and they have only to pick out as many as they choose from

the books that have been already issued. That is the way people do when they are making collections of anecdotes; each man takes the stories of other people who came before him, so that, if you have many of such books, you get some of the illustrations over, and over, and over again. Cheever borrowed from Arvine, and Arvine from Whitecross, or Buck, or Spencer; and where Whitecross and the others borrowed theirs, I do not know; but there must have been some primæval Whitecross, or Buck, or Spencer, or Arvine, or someone else, from whom all the others stole their good things.

Another large collection of illustrations is BATE's *Cyclopædia*. It is entitled: *A Cyclopædia of Illustrations of Moral and Religious Truths (Alphabetically Arranged); Consisting of Definitions, Metaphors, Similes, Emblems, Contrasts, Analogies, Statistics, Synonyms, Anecdotes, etc., etc.* By John Bate. It was originally published by Messrs. Tresidder and Co., but is now in the hands of Messrs. Jarrold and Sons. If anybody praises Mr. Bate's cyclopædia very highly, I should have to a-bate his praise somewhat. Still, it is not a bad collection of anecdotes, and it has some very good things in it. It has a good deal of Arvine in it, and some Whitecross in it, and some Buck in it, and it has some of *Keach's Metaphors* in it. It has also some of Dr. Guthrie's illustrations; in fact, it contains a great many very good things, but there is also a considerable number that nobody could use, or would ever think of using. They help to make the book bigger, and increase its price; and, I hope, they also increase the pay of the good man who made the book, which is a very desirable and proper result. Our friend Bate is a Wesleyan, and there is just the slightest Wesleyan tinge in his volume. Of course, you who are not Wesleyans can do with this book what I advised those who are not teetotallers to do with Arvine; you can pass by anything that you do not like. This is not the best collection of illustrations that ever was made; but it is very good in its way.

Then followed a book by the REV. ELON FOSTER, of New York, bearing the title, *New Cyclopædia of Illustrations*, which Messrs. Dickinson and Higham brought out; but Mr. Foster, being an American, had appropriated so many of Mr. Bate's illustrations that, when the volume was printed here, Mr. Bate expected Mr. Dickinson to pay him a royalty on all the copies he sold. I might have done the same thing in several instances, for I am a

considerable sufferer by these makers of anecdote books, for they never make one now without plucking my feathers pretty freely, and using my illustrations without stint. I do not say much about that matter; but there is one thing which, to me, is a greater cause for complaint. I mean, when people take my material without even giving me the credit of it.

When a certain gentleman produced his first volume of anecdotes and illustrations, there was a man of the name of Spurgeon, who was a decent fellow in very fair repute, so the compiler took a number of that man's thoughts, and put his name, "Spurgeon," upon them. Here and there in the book was the name, "Spurgeon," "Spurgeon." It was very kind to use the poor man's illustrations like that, and to put his name to them; it was very kind, indeed; I ought to take my hat off to the gentleman, and I would, only it is not on my head. But during the time that the second volume was being compiled, the aforesaid man committed himself in a most disgraceful manner, through speaking his mind about the teaching of the Church of England. Such action, in some people's estimation, is a sin unto death. Therefore, the compiler was unable to put the name of this wicked man into his second volume; but he was unwilling to refrain from taking the wicked man's illustrations, so he took them, and inserted them without the author's name, and there is the first volume disgraced and degraded with my horrible name; here it is in my hand; but the second volume has my thoughts and illustrations without my name. No doubt that is thought to be a very great improvement; but I do not quite see the justice of it.

It is of a piece with the way in which I have been treated by other Church of England writers. There is a certain magazine of theirs which, month by month, used to have a piece of mine in it, taken word for word out of my *Feathers for Arrows*, and they put at the bottom of the extracts, *By an old Author*. I am the "old author." One editor of a Church of England magazine took *John Ploughman's Almanack*,—and "John Ploughman," you know, is a particular friend of mine,—well, this gentleman took the almanack, and put in every month the whole of the proverbs, January, February, March, and so on, as if they had been his own; and I wondered how long that kind of thing was going on, so I wrote to the editor to say that it was a very bright idea for him to take all my friend "John Ploughman's" proverbs in that way, and print them in his magazine as he was doing, but that I was instructed by "John Ploughman" to say that he was not to do it

any longer. The editor wrote back to ask what he should do, because he had begun printing the proverbs, and he should like to publish them in his magazine right through the year. I said, "Well, if you do so, you ought to say that I am the author of the proverbs, and say that you took them from me. If you do that, you will be a gentleman and a Christian, and I will say nothing more about the matter; but as that is, perhaps, too much to expect from you, you may simply put the names of the publishers, and say that the proverbs are 'John Ploughman's,' and then my name will not defile your pages." And, would you believe it, brethren, the gentleman actually accepted the second alternative?

I cannot imagine in what state of heart I should be myself, if, sitting here amongst you this afternoon, I were to say, "Well, brethren, I should have commended certain works to you; but I hear that, the other Sunday, the author spoke from his pulpit against believers' baptism, and therefore I will not advise you to buy his books." Why, I should think myself as mean as certain other people I have known, if I were to act in such a fashion as that! And for a man to take my pieces, and put them into his book without inserting my name as the author of them, simply because I had said what I believe to be the truth about the Church of England, I think to be atrocious. It may be, however, that, in the exercise of his Christian charity, he thought I should be exalted above measure if my name was allowed to appear to so many extracts, so he kindly omitted it; therefore, with that interpretation of his action, we will leave the matter.

The result of Mr. Bate's complaint of Mr. Foster was that Mr. Dickinson employed the Rev. J. G. Pilkington, Incumbent of St. Mark's, West Hackney, and compiler of *The Spiritual Garland*, to produce another book, which is called, *The Dictionary of Illustrations, Adapted to Christian Teaching: Embracing Mythology, Analogies, Legends, Parables, Emblems, Metaphors, Similes, Allegories, Proverbs; Classic, Historic, and Religious Anecdotes; etc.* This is, I believe, the best book of illustrations that exists at present. I have looked through all the cyclopædias which I know, and I think I may fairly say that this is far better than anything else of the kind that has yet been produced. I may also say of it, using the familiar quotation, "*Quorum pars magna fui,*" for there are many pages on which you will see my name printed, so I may be said to have a very fair finger in that pie. I cordially commend it to you, excepting the portion that is mine;

that, I do not care about recommending to you, you can form your own opinion upon that part of the work. I think it is a well-arranged and judiciously-made collection, containing not only anecdotes, and really good illustrations, but proverbial sayings, pithy pieces, and things worth knowing, worth saying, and worth your people hearing. I should decidedly say that you cannot do better than buy this cyclopædia, DICKINSON'S *Dictionary of Illustrations*. You will not regret, I am sure, that you have so invested your money. There are 6,744 extracts in the volume, and that number ought to be sufficient to last you for a week or two at least.

Then, Mr. Elliot Stock issued two books of illustrations. The first was entitled, *The New Handbook of Illustration; or, Treasury of Themes, Meditations, Anecdotes, Analogies, Parables, Similitudes, Types, Emblems, Symbols, Apologues, Allegories, and Expositions of Scripture Truth and Christian Life*; and the second was called, *The New Cyclopædia of Illustrative Anecdote, Religious and Moral, Original and Selected*. I remember reviewing this New Cyclopædia of Illustrative Anecdote, and I said that it was a new cyclopædia of very old anecdotes, and I cannot alter that verdict. The cyclopædia is new, but the anecdotes certainly are not. They are Whitecross's, and Arvine's, and everybody else's, touched up, and put in new order. Still, if you have not any other, you will find this to be a capital book of illustrations. We live in an age in which everything is better than it used to be, and I hope everything is going to be better than it now is. Dr. Guthrie liked this Cyclopædia of Anecdote, and wrote commending it very highly; and he was a man who ought to know the value of such works, for he was himself a great master of the art of illustration. These two volumes of Mr. Elliot Stock's would make a very handsome present for any minister. I suggest to your congregations, brethren, that they should give them to you when you are settled in the ministry.

Among the very best books of illustrations are the two volumes by MR. BOWES, entitled, *Illustrative Gatherings for Preachers and Teachers. A Manual of Anecdotes, Facts, Figures, Proverbs, Quotations, &c.* By the Rev. G. S. Bowes, B.A., formerly Rector of Chillingham, Kent, and late scholar of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. They are published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co. I cannot praise them too highly; they are a perfect mine of discourses, you can get

any number of sermons out of them ; that is to say, if you have any sermons in your own soul, and if you can make them when the materials are supplied to you. The compiler of these books has put the matter he has gathered into such a handy shape, that you cannot help getting good by using his works. I heartily recommend Mr. Bowes' books ; and I believe that, whoever buys them upon my recommendation, will think that I have done him a good service. They contain an admirable collection of all sorts of good things, well arranged under proper headings so as to be exceedingly helpful to a student or minister. There are not only anecdotes and illustrations, but also parables, and witty and pithy remarks upon texts of Scripture, and notes upon various doctrines, so that a man who has these two volumes will have something which will last him, as I said just now about another book, for a week or two, at any rate. I question whether he will be able to use all the material he will find there for many a day to come ; he will, at all events, be saved from the necessity of making anecdotes, for he will have plenty here all ready for use.

The last book of illustrations that I recommend you to buy, if you do not already possess it, is, *Feathers for Arrows ; or Illustrations for Preachers and Teachers, from my Note-book*. By C. H. SPURGEON. It has as many new illustrations in it as any book that I know ; they are nearly all new, and they are all original. I met with a High Churchman once, who told me that he had purchased *Feathers for Arrows* ; "and," said he, "some of the illustrations are very telling ; but they have to be used with great discretion." His words seemed to imply that my expressions were possibly a little too strong, and perhaps somewhat rough and unpolished here and there ; so he said, "They must be used with great discretion." "Well," I replied, "that is how I wrote them." He looked at me, but he said nothing ; probably it had never occurred to him that the same kind of discretion was necessary in making the illustrations as in using them.

I shall have to make another list of books of anecdotes and illustrations by-and-by when I prepare this lecture for the press ; *

* As MR. SPURGEON was not spared to carry out this intention, it has been deemed advisable not to make any additions to the list of books given in this lecture and the following one, but, in an Appendix, to reprint reviews from *The Sword and the Trowel* of any volumes of anecdotes, illustrations, etc., that have been published since the lectures were prepared. In another Appendix will be found a complete catalogue of MR. SPURGEON'S own illustrative works.

but this list comprehends all that I know of in the English language at the present time. If any brother here knows of another book of anecdotes or illustrations that I have not mentioned, I should be very glad if he would tell me of it, as I should like to make the list complete. I have used all means to find out any other books of the kind, but have not heard of any more.

Of course, brethren, I am fully aware that there is a host of books of anecdotes in addition to those I have mentioned; but they are not religious anecdotes, nor were they compiled for the use of ministers. That opens up quite another field of illustration. I have often obtained quite as much help from anecdotes that were not religious as I have from those that are. The *Percy Anecdotes* must always be classed as "A1" amongst books of miscellaneous anecdotes. Even volumes of wit and humour may be of service, if used, as my High Church friend said, "with great discretion."

There is a shilling book of wit and humour, which came out a little while ago, which really has some stories in it that are very well worth turning to account. They are amusing, but they are narrated as facts of history, and they illustrate human weakness in such a way that you can very easily use them to set forth the folly and stupidity of sin. I remember one of these stories about the mayor of a town in France. His daughter had a canary bird, and it escaped from its cage, so he issued a proclamation that all the gates of the town were to be shut, so that the little creature might not get away. That is a very telling illustration of how men tried to prevent the spread of religious truth in the olden time. The Roman Catholics shut the gates to keep the truth within bounds; but truth, like the canary bird, had wings, and it was no use to shut the gates to try to confine it to the town. That same mayor, when the King of France went through the town, with thousands of armed men, told him that, about four miles away, there was a very dangerous wood, with thieves lurking in it, and if his majesty would not mind, he would send the beadle and two men to protect the army as they went through the wood! That is wonderfully like the way in which the Church of England protects our liberties as Nonconformists. You know that we are all indebted for our civil and religious liberty to the Church of England; we should never have been allowed to exist if it had not been for the church as by law established;—*so some say!* They have preserved us from the Church of Rome, and they are now doing the best they can, with their beadles, to defend the

great army of dissenters against all dangers, imaginary and real! Well, well, brethren, such a harmless joke as that can be very readily turned to good practical account.

There is a great number of books of illustrations, such as those which Mr. TIMBS has compiled, under the title of *Anecdote Lives of Wits and Humorists*, containing much information about people and things not generally known; but then, if I get into that line of illustration, I shall begin an endless task. I am now only trying to give you a list of anecdotes compiled for the use of ministers. I remember, in reviewing PAXTON HOOD's *World of Anecdote*, I said that it was a cyclopædia of religious anecdotes and others. They certainly are a queer assortment of stories, as curious a collection as I ever saw put together. I have often wondered why they were printed at all, except for the real geniality and fun of the thing; whether Mr. Hood ever asked a blessing on that volume, I do not know.

Many shilling books of anecdotes have come out at different times; they are generally to be seen on the railway bookstalls. Some of the anecdotes are just suitable for travellers on the railway; and some of the older ones are very old. Mr. Joseph Miller, whoever he may have been, was the author of a large number of them. A remarkable man was that Mr. Joseph Miller; but brethren, beware of ever using any of his anecdotes, or telling any of his stories! The mention of this venerable gentleman, and his ancient sayings, reminds me of a newspaper article that I read the other day, a few extracts from which will appropriately close this already long lecture. The heading of the article was "An Asylum of Similes", and the writer said:—

"Among the institutions of the future there certainly ought to be an asylum for similes, a place of quiet retreat, where the decayed similitude, the decrepit metaphor, and the aged and tortured illustration may find rest, and be definitely relieved from further active service. There is a vast number of these poor beings at present wandering up and down columns of papers, pages of books, and speakers' addresses, who have well earned their right to be pensioned off. Your heart is filled with compassion when you meet these old friends on the literary, oratorical, or hortatory high road, all travel-stained and toil-worn, and you are led to wish that some means could be found of keeping them comfortably indoors. . . . There is our friend, 'the old man of the sea', who, by this time, must be heartily sick of riding on orators' necks, and being denounced and flung off amid

tumultuous applause. This poor fellow has had to do an awful amount of duty in his time. He has had now to represent the chief of the opposite party, and now the rival candidate; at one time he has been forced to illustrate the income tax, and at another the landlords or the parsons; he was howled at for years as 'Protection', and now, he is beginning to be hooted as 'Free Trade.' Surely, in this case, humanity should step in, and the aged one should be allowed to retire to the asylum, and peacefully breathe his last, at last. He might do so very properly, side by side with Queen Anne, for it is really quite time that she died for good and all, and was released from the drudgery of serving the small beer of wittlings. There are plenty of other worthy candidates. 'Macaulay's schoolboy' would be very glad now, no doubt, if he were only asked to leave off knowing everything, and being made a butt of for it. This poor youth has been trotted out to be sneered at ever since he was born, and has never been allowed the ghost of a holiday. It is time he was released from duty, and allowed to go and play lawn-tennis in the asylum grounds with the Spartan boy, who has surely had his inside torn out by that fox quite enough in twenty centuries to satisfy the most brutal moralist in search of illustrations Columbus, also, might at any time claim admission by right of his egg. Nearly everybody who has wanted to be smart or striking has quoted that egg, and modestly suggested the inference that he is the man to 'show you how'; and the egg must be fairly addled by now. He would be quite at home in the asylum with that King of Spain who was grilled to death because the proper officer was not at hand to turn him over or baste him. We have all hurled the latter at the heads of the people in official positions, and he must be longing to be left to grill in tranquillity. Scores of other candidates will occur to every one's mind. And the 'humans' would by no means lack specimens of the animal creation to keep them company in the asylum. There is Newton's dog Diamond, for instance, who has been pointing the moral of patience in calamity for ever so many generations. Bruce's spider, too, is another deserving candidate. The superior narrator has been lugging this poor creature into his improving tale or essay for ages now, till he has made him the terror of every generation of youth. It is time he was allowed to leave off persevering, and to eat his flies in peace. The whole of *Æsop's* menagerie should certainly be admitted. The sarcastic way in which these poor animals have been treated for ages is a reproach to the human

race. . . . Our asylum would not lack external adornment. There are many objects of nature from which literature and oratory have had a good innings, with which they ought to be satisfied. For instance, there are Scylla and Charybdis, who were recruited for short service by Homer, but have been kept hard at work in the ranks ever since his day. They should go to adorn the grounds, together with Pelion and Ossa, and be soothed to rest there by the Pierian spring. Then Goldsmith's tall cliff, that midway cleaves the storm, should also decorate the landscape; and a niche should be cut in it for Mahomet's coffin, which has been used as a simile for a dozen centuries in spite of all the laws of matter, and might well be released from its state of suspense. And here, again, hundreds of other suitable candidates will suggest themselves to the patient reader. Somebody really ought to found this asylum as soon as possible, in the interests of literary humanity."

And so say all of us, do we not, brethren?

LECTURE VI

Books of Fables, Emblems, and Parables.

MY purpose this afternoon, brethren, is to give you a little guidance as to books in which you can find fables, emblems, and parables. We desire to preach in the best possible manner, and to maintain our people's attention from the first word we utter to the close of the discourse. We shall, therefore, find it very helpful, not only to make use of illustrations and anecdotes, of which I have spoken to you before, but also to have a good choice of language, a variety of tone, and as much as possible of excellent matter that will tend to light up and explain the subject on which we are speaking. To that end, we shall be wise if we introduce into our preaching parables and emblems, as many of them as we can.

I may again remind you, as I have done in previous lectures, that the teaching of God himself was always mainly by parables. The whole of the typical ceremonies and sacrifices of the Jewish law are so many acted parables. It is all parabolical, symbolical, emblematic teaching; the lamb killed, the blood sprinkled, the first-born slain, the scape-goat sent away, the brazen serpent uplifted, and so on; you know the interpretation of it all; it was a long series of parables, and symbols, and types, by which God was speaking to men. Most of the Old Testament teaching seems to have been parabolical. The prophets constantly employed parables and emblems; indeed, they were not only in the habit of throwing truth into the parabolic and emblematic form, but also into the histrionic. Many condemn anything like the histrionic in preaching; I mean by that term, the acting visibly, using signs and tokens which bring the truth to the eye as well as to the ear. The prophets made use of that method very largely. We find Jeremiah commanded by the Lord to make bonds and yokes, and to put them upon his neck, and afterwards to send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, as an emblem of their servitude to the king of Babylon. Ezekiel also

was bidden to take a tile, and pourtray upon it the city of Jerusalem, "and lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about." He was also told to take an iron pan, or plate, and set it up between himself and the city, to show after what style it would be besieged. All this was to be, "a sign to the house of Israel." I need not stay to mention the many forms in which the prophets were continually instructing God's ancient people by signs, and symbols, and emblems, and parables. If you were to take a flower into the pulpit, and especially if you were to exhibit a pair of scales, as Matthew Wilks did, you would be put into the newspapers, and be pilloried for weeks; but the prophets were divinely commanded to act as they did, and they therefore obeyed the Word of the Lord, whatever men might think or say of their action.

Similes were also largely employed by our Lord himself. He put truth into such a form as would be most likely to arrest the attention of men, and touch their hard hearts, and reach their seared consciences; he taught scarcely anything to the great mass of the people except by this method of instruction: "without a parable spake he not unto them." After the close of his open-air addresses to the multitudes, his disciples came to him, and he opened up to them the inner meaning of his public discourses, and gave them deeper spiritual truth than his ordinary hearers were able or willing to receive. We may conclude, therefore, from our Lord's use of the parable, that it is a most important mode of teaching, and we cannot do better than employ it ourselves wherever and whenever we can.

If any of you want to find a good article upon emblematic teaching, and especially upon the parables, you should read TRENCH'S "Introductory Essay" to his *Notes on the Parables of our Lord* (John W. Parker & Son). There you will see how he draws a distinction between the parable and the fable, the parable and the *mythus*, the parable and the proverb, and the parable and the allegory; and he draws these distinctions, I think, with very great wisdom and sense. Much more might be said upon the matter; but there is quite sufficient in what he has written for a preface to a book on our Saviour's parables, and there is much that it will be well for all students of the various modes of speech thoroughly to understand. Trench's conclusion puts the whole matter in such a concise form that I venture to read it to you:—

"To sum up all, then, the parable differs from the fable,

moving as it does in a spiritual world, and never transgressing the actual order of things natural;—from the *mythus*, there being in the latter an unconscious blending of the deeper meaning with the outward symbol, the two remaining separate and separable in the parable;—from the proverb, inasmuch as it is longer carried out, and not merely accidentally and occasionally, but necessarily figurative;—from the allegory, comparing as it does one thing *with* another, but, at the same time, preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, and not transferring, as does the allegory, the properties and qualities and relations of one *to* the other."

These distinctions are so well drawn that I really need add very little to them by way of introduction to our subject this afternoon. You know that *the mythus*, or myth, works the parable so into itself that, while the more learned and thoughtful understand the meaning, the common people generally accept the outside form as being matter of fact. For instance, the old heathens believed that Phaeton obtained leave from his father Helios to drive the chariot of the sun, and that he drove it in such an exceedingly reckless manner, that he lost all control over the horses, and nearly set the world on fire, and he would have done so if Jupiter had not hurled his thunderbolts at him, upset his chariot, and destroyed the furious driver in the fiery river Eridanus! But that is not the lesson intended to be taught by the mythical story; it is meant to show how many a young man, without skill, has attempted to govern a nation, and brought it into inextricable difficulties; or it is an illustration of how, sometimes, a mere novice has become the teacher and pastor of a Christian church, and before long he has tried to drive the chariot of the sun, but has been hurled from it, and, if God has not mercifully prevented such a calamity, to his own destruction, and also to the ruin of the little community of which he tried to be the charioteer.

The *mythus*, you see, makes the outside covering appear as if it were a fact instead of a fiction, and so misleads rather than instructs the people, except it be the initiated, who pierce through the shell, and get at the kernel, the truth that is concealed from the multitude.

As for the *allegory*, which is another form of the same kind of emblematic teaching, that explains itself as it goes on. It personifies this and that, and makes qualities into persons; and as it proceeds, it gradually opens itself up to the hearer or reader, the

explanation and the outside garb keeping side by side. Allegories are extended parables; sometimes they are parables developed in the more minute points. They are the branches of a great railway, while the parable is the grand trunk line of metaphorical thought and teaching.

You can use allegories sparingly in preaching; but I should not advise you to give your hearers all of those that have been delivered even in the pulpit in the olden times. I think every one of you should read EDMUND SPENSER'S *Faerie Queene*, and you ought to be able to quote those verses in which he allegorizes all the vices of mankind. There are some lines there, which, if you can transform them from their somewhat grotesque shape, will be worth repeating as long as you live; they are masterly delineations of the vices of which men have been guilty. There is one part where the chariot of sin is represented as being dragged along by "six unequal beasts", "a slothful ass", "a filthy swine", "a bearded goat", "a camel loaden all with gold", "a ravenous wolf", and "a lion, loth for to be led," on which ride Idleness, Gluttony, Lechery, Avarice, Envy, and Wrath. Just as specimens, let me give you the stanzas concerning Envy and Wrath, and the description of the diabolical waggoner whom Spenser represents as driving 'his dreadful team:—

XXX.

"And next to him malicious Envy rode
Upon a ravenous wolf, and still did chaw
Between his canker'd teeth a venomous toad,
That all the poison ran about his chaw;¹
But inwardly he chawèd his own maw
At neighbours' wealth, that made him ever sad;
For death it was when any good he saw;
And wept that cause of weeping none he had
But when he heard of harm, he waxèd wondrous glad.

XXXI.

"All in a kirtle of discolour'd say²
He clothèd was, ypainted full of eyes;
And in his bosom secretly there lay
A hateful snake, the which his tail uptyes:³
In many folds, and mortal sting implyes:⁴
Still as he rode, he gnasht his teeth to see
Those heaps of gold with⁵ griple⁶ Covetise;
And grudgèd at the great felicity
Of proud Lucifera, and his own company.

¹ Jaw.² Many-coloured silk.³ Twists.⁴ Wraps up.⁵ In possession of.⁶ Grasping.

XXXII.

"He hated all good works and virtuous deeds,
 And him no less, that any like did use ;
 And, who with gracious bread the hungry feeds,
 His alms for want of faith he doth accuse ;
 So every good to bad he doth abuse :
 And eke¹ the verse of famous poets' wit
 He does backbite, and spiteful poison spues
 From leprous mouth on all that ever writ :
 Such one vile Envy was, that fifth in row did sit.

XXXIII.

"And him beside rides fierce revenging Wrath,
 Upon a lion, loth for to be led ;
 And in his hand a burning brand he hath,
 The which he brandisheth about his head :
 His eyes did hurl forth sparkles fiery red,
 And starèd stern on all that him beheld ;
 As ashes pale of hue, and seeming dead ;
 And on his dagger still his hand he held,
 Trembling through hasty rage, when choler in him swell'd.

XXXIV.

"His ruffin² raiment all was stained with blood
 Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent ;
 Through unadvised rashness waxen wood ;³
 For of his hands he had no government,
 Ne cared for blood in his avengement :
 But when the furious fit was overpast,
 His cruel facts he often would repent ;
 Yet, wilful man, he never would forecast,
 How many mischiefs should ensue his heedless haste.

XXXV.

"Full many mischiefs follow cruel Wrath ;
 Abhorred Bloodshed, and tumultuous Strife,
 Unmanly Murder, and unthrifty Scath,⁴
 Bitter Despite, with Rancour's rusty knife ;
 And fretting Grief, the enemy of life :
 All these, and many evils more haunt Ire,
 The swelling Spleen, and Frenzy raging rife,
 The shaking Palsy, and Saint Francis' fire ;⁵
 Such one was Wrath, the last of this ungodly tire.⁶

XXXVI.

"And, after all, upon the waggon beam
 Rode Satan, with a smarting whip in hand,
 With which he forward lasht the lazy team,
 So oft as Sloth still in the mire did stand.
 Huge routs of people did about them band,⁷

¹ Also. ² Ruffian. ³ Mad. ⁴ Mischief. ⁵ St. Antony's fire, or erysipelas.
⁶ probably meant. ⁷ Row. ⁸ Gather.

Shouting for joy ; and still before their way
 A foggy mist had cover'd all the land ;
 And, underneath their feet, all scatter'd lay
 Dead skulls and bones of men, whose life had gone astray."

I do not think it is very easy to do this allegorizing, and all who have attempted it have not succeeded at it. I have now and then tried it myself, and some of you may recollect a sermon of mine on "Things that Accompany Salvation" (No. 152), which consisted of an allegory under the form of a procession. You can study the sermon for yourselves ; but I will give you a few extracts from it, so that you may see how I felt moved of God to set forth his truth on that particular occasion :—

"I sat myself down, and I meditated on this subject,—‘Things that accompany Salvation.’ And after some period of rumination, my thoughts assumed the form of an allegory ; in which I hope to present them to you this morning. I compared Salvation to a rich and costly treasure, which God, in his infinite love and mercy, had determined to send into the world ; and I remembered that our Lord Jesus was so much interested in the bringing of this Salvation to this earth, that he did send all that he had, and came himself to attend and to accompany this Salvation. I then pictured to myself a great march of bright ones through this land, carrying in their midst the sacred jewel of Salvation. I looked upward, and I saw a mighty vanguard, who have already attained the shores of Eternity. I looked around Salvation, and I saw it always attended with divers graces and virtues, which seemed to be like troops of soldiers to guard it in the van, about its flanks, and in the rear. . . .

"Picture then to yourselves the march of some ancient monarch through his territory. We read stories of Eastern potentates, in the olden time, that seem more like romance than reality ; when they marched with thousands of flying banners and with all kinds of riches borne in their train. Now you are to take that as the basis of my figure, and suppose Salvation to be the sacred treasure which is being carried through the world, with guards before, and guards behind, to accompany it on its journey.

"We will begin, then, with the *advance-guard that has accompanied Salvation*, or rather, *gone before it*. We shall then come to *those who immediately precede it*, and then we shall notice *those who accompany it by its side*, and conclude by noticing the *rear guard attending upon this Salvation of our God*.

"I. First, then, IN THE MARCHES OF TROOPS AND ARMIES, THERE ARE SOME THAT ARE OUTRIDERS, AND GO FAR AHEAD OF THE OTHER TROOPS. So, in the march of Salvation, there is a certain body of great and mighty ‘things that accompany Salvation’, which have far preceded it to clear the way. I will tell you the names of these stupendous Titans who have gone before. The first is *Election* ; the second is *Predestination* ; and the third is *Redemption* ; and the *Covenant* is the captain of them all. Before Salvation came into this world, Election marched in the very forefront, and it had for its work the billeting of

Salvation. Election went through the world, and marked the houses to which Salvation should come, and the hearts in which the treasure should be deposited. Election looked through all the race of man, from Adam down to the last, and marked with sacred stamp those for whom Salvation was designed. 'He must needs go through Samaria,' said Election; and Salvation must go there. Then came Predestination. Predestination did not merely mark the house, but it mapped the road in which Salvation should travel to that house; Predestination ordained every step of the great army of Salvation; it ordained the time when the sinner should be brought to Christ, the manner how he should be saved, the means that should be employed; it marked the exact hour and moment when God the Spirit should quicken the dead in sin, and when peace and pardon should be spoken through the blood of Jesus. Predestination marked the way so completely, that Salvation doth never overstep the bounds, and it is never at a loss for the road. In the everlasting decree of the Sovereign God, the footsteps of Mercy were every one of them ordained. As nothing in this world revolves by chance,—as even the foreknown station of a rush by the river is as fixed as the throne of a king,—it was not meet that Salvation should be left to chance; and therefore God has mapped the place where it should pitch its tent, the number of its footsteps to that tent, and the time when it should arrive there. Then came Redemption. The way was rough; and though Election had marked the house, and Predestination had mapped the road, the way was so impeded that Salvation could not travel it until it had been cleared. Forth came Redemption; it had but one weapon, that weapon was the all-victorious cross of Christ. There stood the mountains of our sins; Redemption smote them, and they split in halves, and left a valley for the Lord's redeemed to march through. There was the great gulf of God's offended wrath; Redemption bridged it with the cross, and so left an everlasting pathway by which the armies of the Lord may pass over. Redemption has tunneled every mountain, it has dried up every sea, cut down every forest, levelled every high hill, and filled up all the valleys, so that the road of Salvation is now plain and simple. God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

"Now, this sacred advance-guard carried for their banner the Eternal Covenant. Election, Predestination, and Redemption,—the things that have gone before, beyond the sight are all rallied to the battle by this standard,—the Covenant, the Everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure. We know and believe that, before the morning star startled the shades of darkness, God had covenanted with his Son that he should die and pay a ransom price, and that, on God the Father's part, he would give to Jesus 'a number whom no man could number,' who should be purchased by his blood, and through that blood should be most securely saved. Now, when Election marches forward, it carries the Covenant. These are chosen in the Covenant of grace. When Predestination marcheth, and when it marketh out the way of Salvation, it proclaims the Covenant. 'He marked out the places of the people according to the tribes of Israel.' And Redemption also, pointing to the precious blood of Christ, claims Salvation for the blood-bought ones, because the Covenant hath decreed it to be theirs.

“But, my dear hearers, this advance-guard is so far ahead that you and I cannot see them. These are true doctrines, but very mysterious; they are beyond our sight; and if we wish to see Salvation, we must not stop until we see the vanguard, because they are so far off that only the eye of faith can reach them. We must have that sacred glass, that divine telescope of faith, or else we shall never have ‘the evidence of things not seen.’ Let us rest certain, however, that if we have Salvation, we have Election. He that believeth is elected; whoever casts himself on Christ as a guilty sinner, is certainly God’s chosen child. As surely as ever you believe on the Saviour, and go to him, you were predestinated to do so from all eternity; and your faith is the great mark and evidence that you are chosen of God, and precious in his esteem. Dost thou believe? Then Election is thine. Dost thou believe? Then Predestination is as surely thine as thou art alive. Dost thou trust alone in Jesus? Then fear not; Redemption was meant for thee. So then, we will not be struck with terror at that grand advance-guard that hath already gained the celestial hill, and hath prepared the place where the elect shall for ever repose upon the bosom of their God.

* * * *

“III. And now comes SALVATION IN ALL ITS FULNESS. The ‘things that accompany Salvation’ make a glorious march in the forefront of it,—from Election down to these precious opening buds of virtue in the sinner’s heart. What a goodly army! Surely, the angels do sometimes fly along in admiration, to see this bright array that heralds Salvation to the heart. And now comes the precious casket set with gems and jewels. It is of God-like workmanship; no hammer was ever lifted on it; it was smitten out and fashioned upon the anvil of Eternal Might, and cast in the mould of Everlasting Wisdom; but no human hand hath ever defiled it, and it is set with jewels so unutterably precious, that if heaven and earth were sold they could never buy another Salvation!

“And who are those that are close around it? There are three sweet sisters that always have the custody of the treasure; you know them, their names are common in Scripture,—Faith, Hope, and Love, the three divine sisters; these have Salvation in their bowels, and do carry it about with them in their loins. *Faith*, that layeth hold on Christ, and trusteth all in him; that ventureth everything upon his blood and sacrifice, and hath no other trust. *Hope*, that with beaming eye looks up to Jesus Christ in glory, and expects him soon to come; looks downward, and when she sees grim Death in her way, expects that she shall pass through with victory. And thou sweet *Love*, the brightest of the three; she, whose words are music, and whose eyes are stars; Love also looks to Christ, and is enamoured of him; loves him in all his offices, adores his presence, reverences his words; and is prepared to bind her body to the stake, and die for him who bound his body to the cross to die for her. Sweet Love, God hath well chosen to commit to thee the custody of the sacred work! Faith, Hope, and Love,—say, sinner, hast thou these three? Dost thou believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Dost thou hope that through the efficacy of his merits thou shalt see thy Maker’s face with joy? Dost thou love him? Have you these three graces? If so, you have Salvation. Having that, you are rich to all intents of bliss;

for God in the Covenant is yours. Cast your eye forward ; remember, Election is yours, Predestination and Sovereign Decree are both yours. Remember, the terrors of the law are past ; the broken heart is healed ; the comforts of religion you have already received ; the spiritual graces are already in the bud ; you are an heir of immortality, and for you there is a glorious future. These are the ' things that accompany Salvation.'

"IV. Now you must have patience with me for just a few more minutes ; I MUST BRING UP THE REAR GUARD. It is impossible that, with such a vanguard, grace should be unattended from behind. Now see those that follow Salvation. As there were four bright cherubs that walked in front of it,—you remember still their names,—Humility, Repentance, Prayer, and a tender Conscience,—there are four that follow it, and march in solemn pomp into the sinner's heart. The first of these is Gratitude, always singing, ' Bless the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name.' And then Gratitude lays hold upon its son's hand ; the name of that son is Obedience. ' O my Master,' saith the heart, ' thou hast done so much for me ; I will obey thee.' In company with this fair grace is one called Consecration,—a pure, white spirit that hath no earthliness ; from its head to its foot it is all God's, and all gold. Linked to this bright one, is one called Knowledge, with a face serene and solemn. . . .

"Now, have you these four ? They are rather the successors of Salvation than the heralds of it. ' Oh, yes,' the believer can say, ' I trust I have Gratitude, Obedience, Consecration, and Knowledge !' I will not weary you, but there are three shining ones that follow after these four, and I must not forget them, for they are the flower of them all. There is Zeal, with eyes of fire, and heart of flame, a tongue that burneth, a hand that never wearies, and limbs that never tire ; Zeal, that flies round the world with wings swifter than the lightning's flash, and finds even then her flight too tardy for her wish ; Zeal, ever ready to obey, resigning up herself for Christ, zealously affected always in a good thing. This Zeal always dwells near one that is called Communion. This, surely, is the goodliest of all the train ; an angel spiritualized, an angel purified and made yet more angelic, is Communion. Communion calls in secret on its God ; its God in secret sees. It is conformed to the image of Jesus ; walks according to his footsteps, and lays its head perpetually on his bosom. And, as a necessary consequence, on the other side of Communion, which with one hand lays hold of Zeal, is Joy, joy in the Spirit ; Joy, that hath an eye more flashing than the world's merriment ever gave to mortal beauty, with light foot tripping over hills of sorrow, singing, in the roughest ways, of faithfulness and love. Joy, like the nightingale, sings in the dark, and can praise God in the tempest, and shout his high praises in the storm. This is indeed a fitting cherub to be in the rear of Salvation.

"I have almost done. Just in the rear is Perseverance, final, certain, and sure. Then there follows complete Sanctification, whereby the soul is purged from every sin, and made as white and pure as God himself. Now we have come to the very rear of the army ; but remember, as there was an advance guard so far ahead that we could not see them, so there is a rear guard so far behind that we cannot behold them yet. Let us just try to see them with the eye of faith. . . .

Hark, I hear the silver trumpet sound ; there is a glorious array behind ! A guard, far, far back, is coming, following the steps of the conquering heroes, that have already swept our sins away. Do you not see, in the fore part, there is one, whom men paint as a skeleton ? Look at him ; he is not the king of terrors. I know thee, Death, I know thee ; miserably have men belied thee. Thou art no spectre ; thine hand bears no dart ; thou art not gaunt and frightful. I know thee, thou bright cherub : thou hast not in thy hand a dart, but a golden key that unlocks the gates of Paradise. Thou art fair to look upon, thy wings are like the wings of doves, covered with silver, and like yellow gold. Behold this angel Death, and his successor Resurrection. I see three bright beings coming ; one is called Confidence, see it ! It looks at Death ; no fear is in its eye, no pallor on its brow. See, holy Confidence marches with steady steps ; the cold chill stream of Death doth not freeze its blood. See, behind it, its brother, Victory ; hear him, as he cries, ‘ O Death, where is thy sting ? O Grave, where is thy victory ? ’ The last word, ‘ victory ’, is drowned amidst *the shouts of angels*. These bring up the rear. Angels bear the spirits of the redeemed into the bosom of the Saviour,—

“ ‘ Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in,
They are for ever blest. ’ ”

JOHN SPENCER, in his *Things New and Old*, which I recommended to you in my last lecture, has some curious allegories. There is one which, I had almost said, is enough to make a cat laugh ; and therefore I should hardly recommend you to use it. Indeed, the common handling of allegories is a somewhat delicate matter, and wants more sense than a fool has, or than most of us are ever likely to have. Here are two of Spencer’s allegories :—

HOW IT IS THAT TRUTH DOTHT NOT ALWAYS APPEAR.

“ Time was when Truth lived in great honour ; but, through the envy of her enemies, she was disgraced, and at last banished out of the city, where, sitting upon a dunghill, sad and discontented, she espied a chariot, attended with a great troop, coming towards her. She presently perceived who it was, her greatest enemy, the Lady Lie, clad in changeable-coloured taffety, her coach covered with clouds of all the colours of the rainbow. Impudency and Hypocrisy were on the one side. Slander and Detraction on the other, as attendants ; Perjury ushered all along ; and many (more than a good many) were in the train. When she came to Truth, she commanded her to be carried as a captive, for the greater triumph. At night, she fared well, and would want nothing ; but when morning came, she would be gone, and pay for nothing, affirming she had paid the reckoning over-night. The attendants, upon examination of the matter, justified their lady ; only Truth confessed there was nothing paid, and was therefore compelled to pay for all. The next night, the lady did the like ; but, withal, committed a great outrage. and being for the same brought before the judge, Impudency and Hypocrisy began to justify their lady, Perjury cleared her, Slander and Detraction

laid all the fault on poor Truth, who must now suffer death for that she never did. The judge demands what she had to say for herself; she could say nothing but, 'Not guilty;' neither had she any friend that would plead for her. At last, up steps Time, a grave, experienced counsellor, and an eloquent advocate, and desires favour of the court to sift and search out the matter a little better, lest the innocent might suffer for the nocent. The motion was granted. Then Time began to expel the clouds from the lady's chariot, unmasked her ugly face, unveiled all her followers, and made it appear at last that the Lady Lie was guilty of all the villany; and poor Truth was thus, by the help of Time, cleared, and set at large.

"And thus it is that, though Truth is great, and will prevail at last, yet it doth not always appear, but may fall down in the street (Isa. lix. 14), and be trampled under foot for a time; may be abused, banished, and made to come behind lies and falsehood,—yea, be executed and buried,—when it cannot have time to clear itself until it be too late to save it. Hence it is that the apostle doth not say, 'Now remaineth Truth,' because Truth is often banished, but, '*Now remaineth Faith, Hope, and Charity,*' (1 Cor. xiii. 13,) graces which give a being to every Christian, of which sort Truth manifested is none; for I can believe in Christ, hope for heaven, and love my enemies, though I be belied; but without these I can be no Christian."

THE HONOUR AND DIGNITY OF THE MINISTRY.

"There is a story how the Castle of Truth being, by the King of Jerusalem, left to the guard and keeping of his best servant, Zeal, the King of Arabia, with an infinite host, came against it, begirt it round with an irresistible siege, cut off all passages, all reliefs, all hopes of friends, meat, or ammunition; which Zeal perceiving, and seeing how extremity had brought him almost to shake hands with despair, he calls his council of war about him, and discovers the sadness of his condition, the strength of his enemy, the violence of the siege, and the impossibility of conveying either messages or letters to the Great King, his Master, from whom they might receive new strength and encouragement. Whereupon, the necessity of the occasion being so great, they all conclude there was no way but to deliver the castle,—though upon very hard terms,—into the hands of the enemy. But Zeal staggers at the resolution, and being loth to lose hope, as long as hope had any thread or hair to hold by, he told them he had one friend or companion in the castle, who was so wise, so valiant, and so fortunate, that to him and to his exploits alone he would deliver the management of their safety. This was Prayer, the chaplain to the Great King, and the priest to that colony. Hence Prayer was called, and all proceedings debated; he presently arms himself with humility, clemency, sincerity, and fervency, and, in despite of the enemy, makes his way through, comes to the King his Master, and with such moving passions enters his ears, that presently forces are levied, which, returning under the conduct of Prayer, raise the siege, overthrow the King of Arabia, make spoil of his camp, and give to the Castle of Truth her first noble liberty; which performed, Zeal crowns Prayer with wreaths of olive, oak, and laurel, sets him on his right hand, and says, for his sake, divinity shall ever march in the first rank of honour.

“And certainly, ministers of God’s Word, such as apply their spirits most to the glory of God, and the public,—especially such divines as are Timothys in their houses, Chrysostoms in their pulpits, and Augustines in disputations; such as are just in their words, wise in their counsels; such as are vigilant, diligent, and faithful in the execution of their plans,—who, that is not royal, should seek in honour to precede them?”

If you want some capital allegories, that will do you good to read, buy a book which Messrs. Jackson, Walford, and Hodder have brought out lately. It is called *The Angel of the Water Brooks*, and contains a very admirable set of allegories, mostly for children. “The Angel of the Water Brooks” is the name given to the book because that is the title of the first parable in it.

Insert extract* :—

It shows the power of God’s grace, like a mighty Gulf Stream, destroying the sinner’s evil nature. Many of the parables are equally good, and bring out religious truth with great force.

Coming now to my main purpose, and beginning my list of books of emblems, etc., I will first speak of *fables*. In my opinion, the fable *may* be used by us in our public teaching. The object of the fable is earth-born; it teaches generally some earthly maxim, some piece of worldly wisdom, sometimes, mere low cunning and selfish policy. This being the soul of the fable, the body of it is congruous thereto, for it is generally a concoction of dialogues between animals, beasts, birds, fishes, stones, and I know not what besides. The pure fable hardly does for use in the pulpit; it is a distortion of nature, which is all very well as a guide with regard to policy among men, but it will not do for teaching our hearers the truths of the Bible. I do not say that the fable lies, for there is no intention whatever to deceive in it. I should suppose that nobody was ever deluded into the belief that the cock in the fable

* We have printed the reference to this book just as it appears in the reporter’s transcript of Mr. Spurgeon’s lecture; but we cannot give the extract which was read to the students, for, after considerable search, at the British Museum, and elsewhere, we have been unable to trace the volume. If any reader of these lectures can give us any information with regard to it, we shall be glad to make the necessary alteration in the next edition.—ED.

ever did speak to the bull, or that the fox ever did make those sage remarks about the grapes. But, still, the form of the fable is not that of strict truth, and hence it is not as a rule adapted to the use of the Christian minister, who soars aloft to higher themes than those which the fable is calculated to embellish or explain. Yet there is, I believe, a book published, showing how *Æsop's* fables can be spiritualized; and there are several in which the morals of the fables are applied in various ways. Dr. Martin Luther, who is a great authority, says that he values *Æsop's* fables next to his Bible; and that what the Bible is to heavenly things, *Æsop's* fables are to the earthly. That is what he thinks, and his opinion ought to carry great weight, for he was no mean judge of what was useful to a preacher.

ÆSOP was the earliest writer of fables of whom we know; he is said to have been born at Sardis, a city of Lydia, in the year 620 B.C., though it is alleged by some writers that he was a Phrygian, or a Thracian, or a Samian, while others deny that such a person ever lived, and regard him as only a mythological character. There are a great many of his fables which can be used by us because they are not fables at all; they are only fables in their form and shape, and a very little alteration turns them into parables at once. Let me read one or two to show you that it is so:—

THE BOWMAN AND THE LION.

“A very skilful Bowman went to the mountains in search of game. All the beasts of the forest fled at his approach. The Lion alone challenged him to combat. The Bowman immediately let fly an arrow, and said to the Lion: ‘I send thee my messenger, that from him thou mayest learn what I myself shall be when I assail thee.’ The Lion, thus wounded, rushed away in great fear, and on a Fox exhorting him to be of a good courage, and not to run away at the first attack, he replied: ‘You counsel me in vain; for if he sends so fearful a messenger, how shall I abide the attack of the man himself?’”

Well, now, there is a truth about that fable; if we cannot stand against the arrows, how can we expect to overcome the battle-axe of the warrior? If we cannot bear sickness, which comes as the arrow from the bow of God, we cannot possibly resist the might of God himself. If an affliction, which God sends as a dart from his hand, pricks and wounds the heart so terribly, what must be the power of God when he himself shall come to deal in judgment with the offending sinner? Perhaps you have already perceived that the reason why this fable is so easily accommodated to Scriptural truth is that, at the basis of it, it is not really a fable, it

is a matter of fact. A lion might feel, when shot by an arrow, which wounded him in the eye, for instance, that there was some very powerful enemy attacking him, and he would probably make the best of his way to escape from so great a foe. There is really no need to introduce a fox, or a word from the bowman, or from the lion himself. At the basis of the fable there lies a general fact, and hence you get it formed into a parable. Others of *Æsop's* fables, to use an Irishism, are not fables at all. This one is no fable:—

THE FLIES AND THE HONEY-POT.

“A jar of Honey having been upset in a housekeeper's room, a number of Flies were attracted by its sweetness, and, placing their feet in it, ate it greedily. Their feet, however, became so smeared with the honey, that they could not use their wings, nor release themselves, and were suffocated. Just as they were expiring, they exclaimed, ‘O foolish creatures that we are, for the sake of a little pleasure we have destroyed ourselves!’”

The only fable in that is that the flies are made to speak. You have only to divest it of the personification, and you get the fact that the flies, for the sake of a few moments' pleasure in eating the honey, threw away their lives, and you have there a parable which you can easily turn to good account.

I have found, as the result of long observation in looking over books of fables, that when you read a fable that is not really a fable, you have a parable that is serviceable in the Christian ministry. Therefore, study *Æsop's* fables thoroughly, and sometimes work them into your discourses.

This one, also, is not a fable:—

THE BOY BATHING.

“A Boy, bathing in a river, was in danger of being drowned. He called out to a Traveller, passing by, for help. The traveller, instead of holding out a helping hand, stood by unconcernedly, and scolded the boy for his imprudence. ‘Oh, sir!’ the youth cried, ‘pray help me now, and scold me afterwards.’”

You do not need me to tell you that there are some preachers who are always admonishing the sinner, who may well cry out, “You had better preach Jesus Christ to me, and scold me afterwards.” What a scolding a truly enlightened conscience gives its possessor concerning the sins of the past!

“I know they are forgiven,
But still their pain to me
Is all the grief and anguish
They laid, my Lord, on thee.”

To talk about doctrinal difficulties, or to upbraid the sinner for his mistakes, will be out of season when he is seeking the Saviour; but to give him the plan of salvation, to exhort him to lay hold on eternal life, that is your present work.

Then there is that famous parable about "The North Wind and the Sun", which is no fable :—

"The North Wind and the Sun disputed which was the more powerful, and agreed that he should be declared the victor who could first strip a wayfaring man of his clothes. The North Wind first tried his power and blew with all his might; but the keener his blasts became, the closer the Traveller wrapped his cloak around him; till, at last, resigning all hope of victory, he called upon the Sun to see what he could do. The Sun suddenly shone out with all his warmth; and the Traveller no sooner felt his genial rays, than he took off one garment after another, and at last, fairly overcome with heat, undressed, and bathed in a stream that lay in his path."

The sun was the conqueror, showing that it is love that wins the heart. This parable can readily be spiritualized, and used to show that, while the winds and tornadoes of the Law may sometimes tear away a traveller's cloak, far oftener they make him hug his sins, and bind his self-righteousness more tightly around him, while the gentleness and love of Jesus Christ disarm the man, and make him cast away both his sins and his self-righteousness.

"Law and terrors do but harden,
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon
Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

Here is another of Æsop's parables which is no fable :—

THE OAK AND THE REEDS.

"A very large Oak was uprooted by the wind, and thrown across a stream. It fell among some Reeds, which it thus addressed: 'I wonder how you, who are light and weak, are not entirely crushed by these strong winds.' They replied, 'You fight and contend with the wind, and consequently you are destroyed; while we on the contrary, bend before the least breath of air, and therefore remain unbroken, and escape.'"

There is no fable there, if you leave out the talking of the reeds and the oak; it is a matter of fact that the oak does fall because it will not yield to the storm, while the reeds bend to the breeze, and are not broken. We must either bend or break, and blessed are they who know how to bend in submission to the will of God, singing with Faber,—

"I bow me to thy will, O God,
And all thy ways adore;
And every day I live I'll seek
To please thee more and more."

This also is a parable more than a fable :—

THE BOY AND THE FILBERTS.

"A Boy put his hand into a pitcher full of Filberts. He grasped as many as he could possibly hold ; but when he endeavoured to pull out his hand, he was prevented from doing so by the neck of the pitcher. Unwilling to lose his filberts, and yet unable to withdraw his hand, he burst into tears, and bitterly lamented his disappointment. A bystander said to him, 'Be satisfied with half the quantity, and you will readily draw out your hand.'"

This is a fact that has often occurred, and it shows how vain is covetousness, and how impossible it is for a greedy boy or a covetous man to be happy. You know how you can attempt too much, and really not do anything ; or grasp too much, and so lose everything.

Here are two more of *Æsop's* fables that are not fables :—

THE THIRSTY PIGEON.

"A Pigeon, oppressed by excessive thirst, saw a goblet of water painted on a sign-board. Not supposing it to be only a picture, she flew towards it with a loud whirr, and unwittingly dashed against the sign-board, and jarred herself terribly. Having broken her wings by the blow, she fell to the ground, and was caught by one of the bystanders."

THE OXEN AND THE AXLE-TREES.

"A heavy Waggon was being dragged along a country lane by a team of Oxen. The Axle-trees groaned and creaked terribly ; when the Oxen, turning round, thus addressed the wheels : 'Hulloa there ! why do you make so much noise ? We bear all the labour, and we, not you, ought to cry out.'"

So much, then, for one book, *Æsop's Fables*, which will be a storehouse of illustration to you if you use it discreetly.

Amongst modern makers of fables,—fables proper, and fables improper, in the sense of not being fables, but parables,—you have MRS. PROSSER. A famous woman that ! You can get her book, *Original Fables and Sketches*, of the Religious Tract Society. Her little fables appeared, week by week, in *The Leisure Hour*. Take this one, which, I think, is a very beautiful parable :—

THE COMPLAINT OF THE EAST WIND.

"'Why do you shrink from me ?' said the east wind, angrily, to the flowers.

"The primrose, for answer, crept under its leaves ; the snowdrop, bending lower, laid her head sadly on the earth ; the opening buds closed again, and the young and tender green leaves curled up, looking dry and withered.

" 'Why do you fly from me?' said the east wind, reproachfully, to the birds.

"For answer, the chaffinch fluttered into a bush; the warblers kept close to their half-made nests; the robin hid under the window-sill; and the sparrows huddled into their holes.

" 'Ungrateful,' howled the east wind. 'Do I not fill the sails of treasure-ships, that bring balmy spices, shining merchandise, and all the precious gifts of far-off lands? The gold and the silver, the gems of the earth and of the ocean, are they not wafted by me to these shores? Yet love never greets me. I find a barren land and a reproachful silence wherever I come.

" 'Ah, my stern brother!' replied the sun, struggling for a moment through a leaden sky, 'read aright the reason of your reception. Who brings the piercing blast and destructive blight? Who hides the azure of the heavens, and dims the beauty of the earth? Who tries to veil me with impenetrable gloom, so that I can no longer bid the world rejoice? Is not this your work? Riches you may bring, but the gifts of your hand cannot atone for your harsh voice and unloving nature. Your presence inspires terror, while it spreads desolation; and where fear is, love is never seen.'

There, again, as in the case of *Æsop*, the only fable is in the talking of the east wind and the sun; for it is a well-known fact that the east wind is highly objectionable both to man and beast, and probably also to flowers and birds. A spiritual truth might well be brought out of that fable or parable, showing the power of love, and the weakness of fear and terror, even when combined with the most substantial excellences.

That is a very simple but good parable of Mrs. Prosser's, where she illustrates the evil of quarrelling in Christian churches, or anywhere else:—

THE LEMONS AND THE SODA.

" 'We could soon finish you up,' said some lemons to a bottle of carbonate of soda

" 'I could soon take the taste out of *you*,' answered the soda.

" 'Let us try our strength,' said the lemons.

" 'With all my heart,' said the soda; and to work they went, trying with all their might to extinguish each other; fizz—went the lemons; fizz—went the soda; and they went on fizzing till there was nothing of either of them left, and only a nauseous puddle showed where the fight had been."

You observe that, here also, there is really no fable; at the bottom, it is a matter of fact. The fable is only in the conversation, the personification, the allegorizing of the thing. Soda and lemons do leave nothing as the result of their fizzing; and hence you can take off the wings of the fable, and turn it to good practical account in Christian instruction.

Among the books of *emblems* which ought to be very useful to you, is AUSTEN on *Fruit Trees*. I will read you the title-page of the original edition:—*The Spiritual Use of an Orchard, or Garden of Fruit Trees, Held Forth in Divers Similitudes between Natural and Spiritual Fruit Trees, according to Scripture and Experience; by Ralph Austen, Practiser in the Art of Planting.* Under this long title is rather a curious illustration of a garden, and various implements used in husbandry, surrounded by this motto:—“A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse. . . Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits.” Austen was not a preacher; but a gardener, a planter of fruit trees. This work is a first-rate book upon how to plant fruit trees, how to trim them, and all that relates to such employment; but the part we have to do with is the portion in which the author spiritualizes fruit trees. The book bears the *imprimatur* of Dr. John Owen, “Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, August 2, 1656;” and that fact alone should be a sufficient guarantee of its quality. Mr. Austen appears to have been a good man, who had passed through a very trying spiritual experience, and who was therefore all the better qualified to be a teacher of others.

In the “Address to the Reader”, recommending this work, “Stephen Ford, Pastor of a Church of Christ in Chippin-Norton,” writes as follows:—

“Concerning the author of the following observations, and similitudes, whatever carnal men, or the pride of spiritual men may object (as who that is zealous, and active for God, can escape the censures of some men), it evidently appears to me that the Spirit of God hath carried him on in this work. Reject not the work because it is not done by a public minister of the gospel, for many private experienced Christians have been (in this way) very profitable to the Church of God; these are the last times, wherein God fulfils his great gospel promise, in pouring out his Spirit upon all flesh; and those whom God intends for special service he prepares them for it by some special preparations. I have seen a large, particular relation, composed by this author, of God’s dealings with him for many years together; wherein it appears that God began betimes with him, early, even the first hour of the day: and he hath been exercised with many temptations from his youth up; having passed through the spirit of bondage early in the morning, and by degrees came to close with Christ, and to attain a comfortable assurance of his interest in him: but afterwards, even about the middle of the day (upon the Spirit’s withdrawing, and God’s hiding of his face for some gracious ends), he fell into a long and sad desertion, passing through the valley of the shadow of death, the pains of hell gat hold upon him, and that in an extraordinary way and measure; but God (by degrees) lifted him up out of the deep pit, out of the mire and clay, and set his feet upon a rock, and hath put a new song into his mouth, and

made him active for God in his generation. As for his following labours, I doubt not but God will make them very useful and profitable to the people of God : what is more helpful to the understanding, and remembering of spiritual things, than plain and pregnant similitudes of things which we are daily conversant with (all these being also enlarged upon by him, and improved to spiritual ends and advantages) ? ”

Austen's own Preface is so exceedingly good, and contains so many metaphors and figurative expressions, that I must give you a few extracts from it :—

“ When we have gone through all the works and labours to be performed in the orchard, and have received thereby a rich recompense of temporal profits and pleasures in the use of the trees and fruits, we may (besides all that) make a spiritual use of them, and receive more and greater profits and pleasures thereby. Men are not wont to stint themselves at worldly profits ; but why are they not willing to receive all kinds of profits, or why are they not willing to receive the greatest and best ? Should a man choose, and prefer a glass bead or toy before some precious and rich jewel, would he not be censured for a foolish man ? How much more foolish and unwise is he that seeks after temporal profits, and neglects spiritual and eternal ? Therefore, be careful to make a spiritual improvement of fruit trees.

“ The world is a great library, and fruit trees are some of the books wherein we may read and see plainly the attributes of God, his power, wisdom, goodness, etc., and be instructed and taught our duty towards him in many things, even from fruit trees : for as trees (in a metaphorical sense) are books, so likewise, in the same sense, they have a voice, and speak plainly to us, and teach us many good lessons.

“ As I have planted many thousands of natural fruit trees for the good of the commonwealth, so also I have taken some spiritual scions or grafts from them (I mean several propositions drawn from observations in nature, which are somewhat branched forth into boughs and twigs), and bound them up, and sent them abroad for the good of the Church of God : and if men will but accept of them, and be content to have them engrafted in their own gardens (their hearts and minds), by the Husbandman's watering of them by his Spirit, they will grow, and bloom, and bear much good fruit, here and for ever, fruits of faith, love, joy, peace, and other fruits of the Spirit, bunches of grapes, for the feeding and refreshing of our souls as we travel through the wilderness, and the increase of our glory hereafter in Canaan to all eternity.

“ Which improvement the Great Husbandman grant unto thee, together with

“ Thy servant in the Lord,

“ RA. AUSTEN.”

Some years ago, I bought a considerable number of these books, and sold them very cheaply to the students ; but if any gentleman here would like a copy, I cannot supply him, for I have none of them left now. You are as likely to meet with it in the old form as in the new ; and if you get it, you ought to prize it for the

abundant parables it contains. You will find that the old Puritan books are about as broad as they are long ; and that is the shape a Christian man ought to be in his character, like “ that great city, the holy Jerusalem,” of which we read, “ the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth.”

Now I will give you a taste of what this book of Mr. Austen's is like. It is all about fruit trees ; everything that can be turned into a metaphor is used. The volume contains exactly a hundred Observations,—that was generally the number the Puritans liked, —a Century of Observations, they called them. This is the first :—

“ The Husbandman makes choice of what wild plants he pleaseth, to bring into his Orchards there to graft, and order to fruit-bearing from year to year. He leaves other plants in the woods and waste grounds, he lets them alone, and meddles not with them ; but takes and leaves these, or those, as pleaseth himself.”

That is, of course, the doctrine of election. Further on, the author says,—

“ The Husbandman doth order his young fruit trees with more tenderness, and gentleness, than such as are strong and well-grown trees, because such (while they are small and tender) are in more danger of breaking, and bruising, and other hurts, than they are afterwards. So that, besides the great walk, or common fence about the Orchard, he makes a more special fence with bushes, stakes, or the like, about each of them, and gives them more choice nourishment, by oftener watering them with good water, that they may grow, and come on the faster.”

You can all see how you can apply that illustration. Here is the eleventh Observation :—

“ We find by experience that, after a plant is engrafted, both the graft and the stock will shoot forth, and if the graft grow vigorously and strongly, then the shoots of the stock are but weak ; but if the shoots of the stock break out strongly, then the graft grows but weakly, therefore the Husbandman takes pains often to cut off the shoots that grow upon the stock, that so the graft may grow the better.”

Austen spiritualizes this Observation thus :—

“ While the spiritual part in us acts and grows strongly, the fleshly part acts but weakly ; so also, if the flesh be strong, the spirit is weak.”

He gives a number of observations of this kind ; I do not know that I can do better than give you some more of them. Here is the thirtieth Observation :—

“ Fruit trees that spread much, and grow low, near the ground, such

(most commonly) bring forth more and larger fruits than high trees that aspire up into the air.

"This shadows out unto us that humble Christians bring forth far more and fairer fruits than such Christians as are lifted up."

This is the ninety-seventh Observation:—

"The root of a tree communicates, and gives up sap to all the branches, one as well as another, to the smallest as well as to the greatest: the least branch, or twig upon the tree, yea, the least bud upon the least branch, hath as constant and real a supply of sap from the root as the greatest bough or branch upon the tree."

"This shadows out unto us that Jesus Christ gives forth as constant a supply of all grace to the meanest of his people as to those who are most eminent."

Get *Austen's Garden of Fruit Trees* if you can, brethren, and be not yourselves either barren or unfruitful.

The next book I shall bring before you is MASTER JOHN FLAVEL'S work called, *Husbandry Spiritualized; or, the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things*. The character of Flavel's writing may be guessed from his introduction, or, as he calls it, "The Proem", to this treatise. Here is a brief summary of his twenty Propositions about husbandmen, and the typical meaning that he attaches to their occupation and surroundings; I do not think I need explain them, the mere mention of them will be sufficient for you to see what good right Flavel has to an honourable place among the makers of metaphors, emblems, etc.:—

"*Ye are God's Husbandry.*"—1 Corinthians iii. 9.

"The life and employment of an husbandman excellently shadow forth the relation betwixt God and his Church, and the relative duties betwixt its ministers and members; or, the Church is God's Husbandry, about which his ministers are employed.

"1. The husbandman purchases his fields, and gives a valuable consideration for them, Jeremiah xxxii. 9, 10.

"So hath God purchased his Church with a full valuable price, even the precious blood of his own Son, Acts xx. 28.

"2. Husbandmen divide and separate their own lands from other men's; they have their land-marks and boundaries, by which property is preserved, Deuteronomy xxvii. 17; Proverbs xxii. 28.

"So are the people of God wonderfully separated and distinguished from all the people of the earth. 'The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself' (Psalm iv. 3); and, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his' (2 Timothy ii. 19).

"3. Corn-fields are carefully fenced by the husbandman with hedges, and ditches, to preserve their fruits from beasts that would otherwise over-run and destroy them. It is as good husbandry to keep what we have, as to acquire more than we had.

"My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he

fenced it' (Isaiah v. 1, 2). No inheritance is better defended and secured than the Lord's inheritance. 'As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people' (Psalm cxxv. 2). See Isaiah iv. 5. There is not a single saint but is hedged about and enclosed in arms of power and love, Job i. 10.

"4. Husbandmen carry out their compost, to fertilize their arable ground; they dung it, dress it, and keep it in heart.

"'Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down' (Luke xiii. 8, 9). Oh, the rich dressing which God bestows upon his churches! They are costly fields indeed, dressed and fertilized, not only by precious ordinances and providences, but also by the sweat, yea, blood of the dispensers of them.

"5. The husbandman builds his house where he makes his purchase, dwells upon his land, and frequently visits it.

"So doth God; wherever he plants a church, there doth he fix his habitation, intending there to dwell. 'God is in the midst of her' (Psalm xlv. 5).

"6. Husbandmen grudge not at the cost they are at for their tillage; but as they lay out vast sums upon it, so they do it cheerfully.

"'And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard! What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?' (Isaiah v. 3, 4.) And as he bestows upon his heritage the choicest mercies, so he doth it with the greatest cheerfulness, Jeremiah xxxii. 41.

"7. When husbandmen have been at cost and pains about their husbandry, they expect fruit from it answerable to their pains and expenses about it, James v. 7; Isaiah v. 2.

"This heavenly Husbandman also waits for the fruits of his fields; never did any husbandman long for the desired harvest more than God doth for the fruits of holiness from his saints.

"8. Husbandmen are much delighted to see the success of their labours, it comforts them over all their hard pains, and many weary days, to see a good increase.

"Much more is God delighted in beholding the flourishing graces of his people; it pleases him to see his plants laden with fruit, and his valleys sing with corn, Cant. vi. 2; iv. 16.

"9. The husbandman is exceedingly grieved when he sees the hopes of a good crop disappointed, and his fields prove barren or blasted.

"So the Lord expresses his grief for and anger against his people, when they bring forth no fruits, or wild fruits, worse than none, Hosea ix. 16.

"10. Husbandmen employ many labourers to work in their fields; there is need of many hands for such a multiplicity of business.

"God hath diversity of workmen also in the churches, whom he sends forth to labour in his spiritual fields. 'He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry' (Ephesians iv. 11, 12)."

Do not read that verse as I heard a brother read it once:—"He

gave some *apostles*, and some *prophets*, and some *evangelists*, and some *pastors* and *teachers*." Put the emphasis in the right place. "He gave *some*, apostles; and *some*, prophets; and *some*, evangelists; and *some*, pastors and teachers."

We are only half way through Mr. Flavel's twenty propositions, so let us continue reading them:—

"11. The work about which husbandmen employ their servants in the field, is toilsome and spending. You see them come home at night so weary that they can hardly draw their legs after them.

"But God's workmen have a much harder task than they; hence they are set forth in Scripture by the laborious ox (1 Cor. ix. 9; Rev. iv. 7). Some derive the word deacon from a word that signifies dust, to show the laboriousness of their employment, labouring till even choked with dust and sweat. The apostle's expression is very emphatical: 'Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily' (Col. i. 29)."

What a grand verse that is! That will do for the brethren who think that the Spirit of God is in them, so they may go to bed, and that there is no more wrestling with the flesh because they have Christ in them, the hope of glory; whereas the teaching of this text is that, the more the Lord works in us, the more conflict there will be: "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." When the Christian reaches that height of experience, there will be no contentment, but a great deal of fighting; and much hard toil, like that of the husbandman.

Again let us resume our reading:—

"12. The immediate end of the husbandman's labour, and his servants' labour, is for the improvement of his land, to make it more flourishing and useful.

"The scope and end of the ministry is for the churches' benefit and advantage. God's husbandmen must not lord it over God's heritage, as if the church were for them, and not they for the church.

"13. The workmen that labour in the fields are accountable for their work to him that employed them.

"Church-officers are also accountable to God for all the souls committed to them. They are stewards of the mysteries of God, and stewards are accountable, 1 Cor. iv. 1; Heb. xiii. 7.

"14. Those that spend their time and strength, all their days, in manuring and ploughing the fields, do maintain themselves and their families by their labours.

"'Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel' (1 Cor. ix. 14).

"15. It is a great trouble to husbandmen, in a busy time, to be put off from their labours by stormy weather, which drives them out of the

fields, and makes them let all lie, till it clear up again ; yet, meanwhile, they are not idle, but employ themselves in home-work.

" Even so, in God's husbandry, it is an unspeakable affliction to God's workmen to be rendered useless and unserviceable to the churches, by those storms of trouble which drive them from their public ministerial work. With what a heavy heart did Paul go off from his work at Ephesus ! Acts xx. It spends a minister to preach ; but it costs him more to be silent.

" 16. There is a vast difference betwixt those fields which have been well husbanded, and dressed by a skilful and diligent husbandman, and those that have been long out of husbandry. How fragrant is the one ! How dry and barren the other !

" Thus stands the case betwixt those places which God hath blest with a faithful, painful ministry, and such as have none, or worse than none. Ministers' pains and diligence are ordinarily seen in the heavenly lives and flourishing graces of the people.

" 17. The husbandman is not discouraged though the seed lie long under the clods ; he knows it will spring up at the last, and reward him, or those that come after him, for their pains and patience in waiting for it.

" Ministers should not be presently discouraged in their work, because they see but little or no appearance of all the seed they have sown among the people.

" 18. Husbandmen find low ground and valleys most fertile. Hills, how loftily soever they overtop the lower grounds, yet answer not the husbandman's pains as the valleys do. These are best watered, and secured from the scorching heat of the sun.

" Experience shows us that the humblest saints are most fruitful under the gospel. These are they who ' receive with meekness the engrafted word ' (James i. 21).

" 19. The first crop is usually the best ; and the longer the husbandman tills his ground, the less it produces. After a few years, its vigour and strength are spent.

" The first entertainment of the gospel is commonly the best ; and what good is done by the ministry is often done at its first entrance, John v. 35 ; Gal. iv. 15.

" 20. Lastly, When fields grow barren, and will not quit the husbandman's cost, nor answer the seed he sows in them, he plucks up the hedges, and lays them waste.

" So, when churches grow formal and fruitless, the Lord removes his gospel-presence from them, plucks up the hedge of his protection from about them, and lays them open as waste ground, to be over-run by their enemies, Jer. vii. 12 ; Isaiah v. 5."

Flavel also wrote a treatise entitled, *A New Compass for Seamen ; or, Navigation Spiritualized*. I am going to give you two specimens of its contents :—

*" Ships make much way when they a trade-wind get.
With such a wind the saints have ever met."*

OBSERVATION.

" Though in most parts of the world the winds are variable, and

sometimes blow from every part of the compass, by reason whereof sailing is slow and dangerous; yet about the Equinoctial, seamen meet with a trade-wind, blowing for the most part one way; and there they sail jocund before it, and scarce need to lower a topsail for some hundreds of leagues.

APPLICATION.

"Although the people of God meet with many seeming rubs and setbacks in their way to heaven, which are like contrary winds to a ship; yet they are from the day of their conversion to the day of their complete salvation, never out of a trade-wind's way to heaven. 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose' (Romans viii. 28). This is a most precious Scripture, pregnant with its consolation, to all believers in all conditions, a pillar of comfort to all distressed saints. Let us look a little nearer to it.

"*'We know.'* Mark the certainty and evidence of the proposition, which is not built upon a guess or remote probability, but upon the knowledge of the saints; *we know it*, and that partly by divine revelation, God has told us so; and partly by our own experience, we find it so.

"*'That all things.'* Not only things that lie in a natural and direct tendency to our good; as *ordinances, promises, blessings*, etc., but even such things as have no natural fitness and tendency to such an end; as *afflictions, temptations, corruptions, desertions*, etc., all these help onward. They—

"*'Work together.'* Not all of them directly, and of their own nature and inclination; but by being over-ruled and determined to such an issue by the gracious hand of God: nor yet do they work out such good to the saints singly and apart, but as *adjuvant causes* or helps, standing under and working in subordination to the supreme and principal cause of their happiness.

"Now, the most seeming opposite things, yea, sin in itself, which in its own nature is really opposite to their good, yet eventually contributes to it. Afflictions and desertions seem to work against us; but being once put into the rank and order of causes, they work together with such blessed instruments as the Word and prayer to a happy issue. And though the faces of these things, that so agree and work together, look contrary ways; yet there are, as it were, secret chains and connexions of providence betwixt them, to unite them in their issue. There may be many instruments employed about one work, and yet not communicate counsels, or hold intelligence with each other. Joseph's brethren, the Midianites, Potiphar, etc., knew not one another's mind, nor aimed at one end (much less the end that God brought about by them); one acts out of revenge, another for gain, a third out of policy; yet all meet together at last, in that issue God had designed to bring about by them, even Joseph's advancement. Even so it is here, Christian; there are more instruments at work for thine eternal good than thou art aware of.

REFLECTION.

"Cheer up, then, O my soul, and lean upon this pillar of comfort in all distresses. Here is a promise for me, if I am a called one; that, like the philosopher's stone, turns into gold all it toucheth. This promise

is my security ; however things go in the world, ' My God will do me no hurt ' (Jeremiah xxv. 6). Nay, he will do me good by every dispensation. Oh, that I had but a heart to make all things work for his glory, that thus causeth everything to work for my good ! My God, dost thou turn everything to my advantage ? O let me return all to thy praise ; and if by everything thou workest my eternal good, then let me in everything give thanks !

" But, ah ! how foolish and ignorant have I been, even as a beast before thee ! How hath my heart been disquieted, and apt to repine at thy dispensations, when they have crossed my will, not considering that my God faithfully pursues my good, even in those things that cross, as well as in that which pleases me !

" Blessed Lord, what a blessed condition are all thy people in, who are within the line of this promise ! All things are friendly and beneficial to them ; friends helpful ; enemies helpful ; everything conspiring and conducing to their happiness. With others it is not so ; nothing works for their good ; nay, everything works against it ; their very mercies are snares, and their prosperity destroys them (Proverbs i. 32). Even the blessed gospel itself is a savour of death to them : when evil befalls them, it is ' an only evil ' (Ezekiel vii. 5) ; that is, not turned into good to them ; and as their evils are not turned into good, so all their good is turned into evil. As this promise hath an influence in all that concerns the people of God, so the curse hath an influence in all the enjoyments of the wicked. O my soul, bless the Lord, who hath cast thy lot in such a pleasant place, and given thee such a glorious heritage as this promise is !

THE POEM.

" When once the dog-star rises, many say,
 Corn ripens then apace, both night and day.
 Souls once in Christ, that Morning-star lets fall
 Such influences on them, that all
 God's dispensations to them, sweet or sour,
 Ripen their souls for glory every hour.
 All their afflictions rightly understood,
 Are blessings ; ev'ry wind will blow some good.
 Sure at their troubles saints would never grudge,
 Were sense deposèd, and faith made the judge.
 Falls make them warier, amend their pace ;
 When gifts puff up their hearts, and weaken grace.
 Could Satan see the issue, and th' event
 Of his temptations, he would scarcely tempt.
 Could saints but see what fruits their troubles bring,
 Amidst those troubles they would shout and sing.
 O sacred wisdom ! who can but admire
 To see how thou dost save from fire, by fire ?
 No doubt but saints in glory wond'ring stand
 At those strange methods few now understand."

THE CHRISTIAN'S COMPASS

is a very ingenious composition, in which all the points of the mariner's compass are mentioned :—

"1. N. Never steer any course, but by light from God, Ps. cxix. 105.

"2. N. by E. Never Enter upon any design, but such as tends towards Christ's glory, 1 Peter iv. 11.

"3. N.N.E. Note Nothing Enviously, which thrives without God, Ps. lxxiii.

"4. N.E. by N. Never Enter on Not-warrantable courses, even to procure the most coveted advantages, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

"5. N.E. Now Entertain the sacred commands of God, if hereafter thou expect the sovereign consolations of God, Ps. cxix. 48.

"6. N.E. by E. Never Esteem Egypt's treasures so much, as for them to forsake the people of God, Heb. xi. 26.

"7. E.N.E. Err Not, Especially in soul-affairs, James i. 16; 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; 2 Tim. ii. 18.

"8. E. by N. Eschew Nothing but sin, 1 Peter iii. 11; Job i. 7, 8; xxxi. 34.

"9. E. Establish thy heart with grace, Heb. xiii. 9.

"10. E. by S. Eye Sanctity in every action, 1 Pet. i. 15; Zech. xiv. 20.

"11. E.S.E. Ever Strive Earnestly to live under, and to improve, the means of grace, Heb. x. 25.

"12. S.E. by E. Suffer Every Evil of punishment or sorrow, rather than leave the ways of Christ and grace.

"13. S.E. Sigh Earnestly for more enjoyments of Christ.

"14. S.E. by S. Seek Evermore Some evidences of Christ in you, the hope of glory.

"15. S.S.E. Still Set Eternity before you, in regard of enjoying Jesus Christ, John xvii. 24.

"16. S. by E. Settle it Ever in your soul, as a principle which you will never depart from, that holiness and true happiness are in Christ, and by Christ.

"17. S. Set thyself always as before the Lord, Psalm xvi. 8; Acts ii. 25.

"18. S. by W. See Weakness hastening thee to death, even when thou art at the highest pitch, or point.

"19. S.S.W. See Sin, Which is the sting of death, as taken away by Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.

"20. S.W. by S. Store Wisely Some provisions every day for your dying day.

"21. S.W. Set Worldly things under your feet, before death come to look you in the face.

"22. S.W. by W. Still Weigh and Watch with loins girded and lamps trimmed, Luke xii. 35, 36, 37.

"23. W.S.W. Weigh Soul-Works in the balance of the sanctuary.

"24. W. by S. Walk in Sweet communion with Christ here, and so thou mayest die in peace, Luke ii. 29.

"25. W. Whatsoever thy condition be in this world, eye God as the Disposer of it, and therein be contented, Phil. iv. 11.

"26. W. by N. Walk Not according to the course of the most, but after the example of the best.

"27. W.N.W. Weigh Not What men speak or think of thee, so God approve thee, 2 Chron. x. 8; Rom. ii. 28, 29.

"28. N.W. by W. Never Wink at, but Watch against small sins; and never neglect little duties, Eph. v. 15, 16.

"29. N.W. Never Wish rashly for death, nor love life inordinately, 1 Kings xix. 4; Job ii. 4.

"30. N.W. by N. Now Work Nimble ere night come, Job x. 21, 22; Eccles. ix. 10.

"31. N.N.W. Name Nothing When thou pleadest with God for thy soul, but Christ and free-grace, Dan. ix. 17, 18.

"32. N. by W. Now Welcome Christ, if at death thou wouldst be welcomed by Christ.

"A tender, quick, enlivened, and enlightened conscience, is the only point upon which we must erect these practical rules of our Christian compass, Heb. xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 12. Our memory, that is the box in which this compass must be kept, in which these rules must be treasured, that we may be as ready and expert in using them as the mariner is in using his sea compass."

I will give you only one more quotation from Flavel, and that shall be from his "Occasional Meditations":—

UPON THE CATCHING OF A HORSE IN A FAT PASTURE.

"When this horse was kept in poor short leas, where he had much scope, but little grass, how gentle and tractable was he then! He would not only stand quiet to be taken, but came to hand of his own accord, and followed me up and down the field for a crust of bread, or a handful of oats; but since I turned him into this fat pasture, he comes no more to me, nor will he suffer me to come near him, but throws up his heels wantonly against me, and flies from me, as if I were rather his enemy than benefactor. In this, I behold the carriage of my own heart towards God, who, the more he hath done for me, the seldomer doth he hear from me. In a low and afflicted state, how tractable is my heart to duty! Then it comes to the foot of God voluntarily; but in an exalted condition, how wildly doth my heart run from God and duty! With this ungrateful requital God charged his own people, Jer. ii. 31, teachable and tractable in the *wilderness*, but when fattened in that rich pasture *Canaan*, then, 'We are lords, we will come no more unto thee.' How soon are all God's former benefits forgotten! and how often is that ancient observation verified, even in his own people,—

" 'No sooner do we gifts on some bestow,
But presently our gifts gray-headed grow' !

"But that's a bad tenant that will maintain a suit at law against his landlord with his own rent; and a bad heart that will fight against God with his own mercies."

These extracts will show you what Flavel is like.

Now, coming to *parables* proper, the best thing I can do for you, brethren, is to indicate where you will find some of them. And, first, there is a large number, as you all know, in JOHN BUNYAN'S

Pilgrim's Progress. Those scenes which Christian beheld in the house of the Interpreter and in the palace called Beautiful, are some of the richest and best parables that are to be found in human literature. Indeed, with the exception of those by our Lord himself, there are none that can excel them. There is the parable of the man sweeping the room, and almost choking the pilgrim with the dust until the water was sprinkled by the damsel standing by. Then there are the two children, Passion and Patience; the fire burning against a wall, yet not quenched by water, because the flame was secretly fed by oil; the man in an iron cage; and others that I will not now call to your remembrance, but which you ought all to know by heart.

You may not, however, all be aware that John Bunyan wrote *A Book for Boys and Girls, Divine Emblems, or Temporal Things Spiritualized*, in which there are some excellent parables. They are really emblems; you will find them in Offor's splendid edition of Bunyan's works, the three volumes that you all ought to get if you can. I will not say that the poetry in these emblems excels Milton's, or even rivals Cowper's, but the sense is good. Take this one, for instance,—

UPON THE FLINT IN THE WATER.

"This flint, time out of mind has there abode,
Where crystal streams make their continual road;
Yet it abides a flint as much as 'twere,
Before it touched the water, or came there.
It's hardness is not in the least abated,
'Tis not at all by water penetrated.
Though water hath a soft'ning virtue in 't,
It can't dissolve the stone, for 'tis a flint.
Yea, though in water it doth still remain,
Its fiery nature still it does retain.
If you oppose it with its opposite,
Then in your very face its fire 'twill spit.

COMPARISON.

"This flint an emblem is of those that lie,
Under the Word, like stones, until they die.
Its crystal streams have not their natures changed,
They are not from their lusts by grace estranged."

Say what you like about the rhyme, but the metaphor is a very good one. The next I will give you is—

UPON THE WHIPPING OF A TOP.

"'Tis with the whip the boy sets up the top,
The whip does make it whirl upon its toe;
Hither and thither makes it skip and hop:
'Tis with the whip the top is made to go.

COMPARISON.

"Our legalist is like this nimble top,
Without a whip he will not duty do.
Let Moses whip him, he will skip and hop ;
Forbear to whip, he'll neither stand nor go."

This is very good, too. If the rhymes are not first-rate, the doctrine is all right. Here is another of Bunyan's emblems :—

UPON THE BEGGAR.

"He wants, he asks, he pleads his poverty,
They within doors do him an alms deny.
He doth repeat and aggravate his grief ;
But they repulse him, give him no relief.
He begs, they say, ' Begone ' : he will not hear,
He coughs and sighs, to show he still is there ;
They disregard him, he repeats his groans ;
They still say, ' Nay,' and he himself bemoans.
They call him ' Vagrant,' and more rugged grow ;
He cries the shriller ; trumpets out his woe.
At last, when they perceive he'll take no nay,
An alms they give him without more delay."

COMPARISON.

"This beggar doth resemble them that pray
To God for mercy, and will take no nay :
But wait, and count that all his hard gainsays
Are nothing else but fatherly delays :
Then imitate him, praying souls, and cry,
There's nothing like to importunity."

That also does not excel in poetry, does it, brethren ? But I think we can put up with the lack of rhyme when we can get teaching so good as that. I will only give you one more emblem :—

THE BOY AND THE BUTTERFLY.

"Behold, how eager this our little boy
Is for a butterfly, as if all joy,
All profits, honours, yea, and lasting pleasures,
Were wrapt up in her, or the richest treasures
Found in her would be bundled up together,
When all her all is lighter than a feather.
He halloos, runs, and cries out, ' Here, boys, here !'
Nor doth he brambles or the nettles fear :
He stumbles at the mole-hills, up he gets,
And runs again, as one bereft of wits ;
And all his labour and his large outcry
Are only for a silly butterfly."

COMPARISON.

"This little boy an emblem is of those
Whose hearts are wholly at the world's dispose.
The butterfly doth represent to me
The world's best things at best but fading be."

All are but painted nothings and false joys,
 Like this poor butterfly to these our boys.
 His running through nettles, thorns, and briers,
 To gratify his boyish fond desires,
 His tumbling over mole-hills to attain
 His end, namely, his butterfly to gain ;
 Doth plainly show what hazards some men run
 To get what will be lost as soon as won.
 Men seem in choice, than children far more wise,
 Because they run not after butterflies :
 When yet, alas ! for what are empty toys,
 They follow children, like to beardless boys."

In his Preface, Master John Bunyan tells "The Courteous Reader" what his reason was for writing this book, and the persons he aimed at in it ; this shows that he meant it for children :—

"The title-page will show, if there thou look,
 Who are the proper subjects of this book.
 They're boys and girls, of all sorts and degrees,
 From those of age to children on the knees.
 Thus comprehensive am I in my notions,
 They tempt me to it by their childish motions.
 We now have boys with beards, and girls that be
 Huge as old women, wanting gravity.
 Then do not blame me, 'cause I thus describe them.
 Flatter I may not, lest thereby I bribe them
 To have a better judgment of themselves,
 Than wise men have of babies on their shelves."

The word "babies" means pictures, "babs" they used to call them ; I do not think we use the word now. They were called "babs" because they were put in for babies ; and so, up till lately, old dictionaries had the word, not referring to babies, but as meaning pictures. The word "babies" was also used in olden times as the name for dolls ; that may be the sense here intended by "babies on their shelves." Bunyan continues :—

"Their antic tricks, fantastic modes, and way,
 Show they, like very girls and boys do play
 With all the frantic fopperies of this age,
 And that in open view, as on a stage ;
 Our bearded men do act like beardless boys ;
 Our women please themselves with childish toys.
 Our ministers, long time by word and pen,
 Dealt with them, counting them not boys, but men.
 They shot their thunders at them and their toys,
 But hit them not, 'cause they were girls and boys.
 The better charg'd, the wider still they shot,
 Or else so high, that dwarfs they touch'd not.
 Instead of men, they found them girls and boys,
 To nought addicted but to childish toys.

Wherefore, good reader, that I save them may,
 I now with them the very dotterel play ;
 And since at gravity they make a tush,
 My very beard I cast behind a bush ;
 And, like a fool, stand fing'ring of their toys,
 And all to show them they are girls and boys."

Here I must mention my favourite poet, FRANCIS QUARLES, whom I would not exchange even for John Milton. He had as much poetry in him as could possibly be compacted into one little man's body ; but he has been forgotten, and is now ignored by many. His *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, are full of parables ; they are not emblems borrowed from nature, but emblems invented by himself in a most wonderful way. The woodcuts are very extraordinary ; he must have stood upon his head to have thought of them. You can pick out, here and there, a little parable like this one, which you will find in the sixth emblem of Book III. :—

" Lord, if the peevish infant fights and flies,
 With unpar'd weapons, at his mother's eyes,
 Her frowns (half-mix'd with smiles) may chance to show
 An angry love-tick on his arm, or so ;
 Where, if the babe but make a lip and cry,
 Her heart begins to melt, and by-and-by
 She coaxes his dewy cheeks ; her babe she blesses,
 And chokes her language with a thousand kisses ;
 I am that child : lo, here I prostrate lie,
 Pleading for mercy, I repeat, and cry
 For gracious pardon : let thy gentle ears
 Hear that in words, what mothers judge in tears :
 See not my frailties, Lord, but through my fear,
 And look on every trespass through a tear :
 Then calm thine anger, and appear more mild ;
 Remember, thou art a Father, I a child."

This is another of Quarles' emblems :—

" *Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up.*"—Psalm lxix. 15.

" The world's a sea ; my flesh a ship that's mann'd
 With lab'ring thoughts, and steer'd by reason's hand :
 My heart's the seaman's card, whereby she sails ;
 My loose affections are the greater sails ;
 The top-sail is my fancy, and the gusts
 That fill these wanton sheets, are worldly lusts.
 Prayer is the cable, at whose end appears
 The anchor Hope, ne'er slipp'd but in our fears :
 My will's the inconstant pilot, that commands
 The stagg'ring keel ; my sins are like the sands :
 Repentance is the bucket, and mine eye
 The pump unused (but in extremes) and dry :

My conscience is the plummet that does press
 The deeps, but seldom cries, O fathomless :
 Smooth calm's security ; the gulph, despair ;
 My freight's corruption, and this life's my fare :
 My soul's the passenger, confus'dly driven
 From fear to fright ; her landing port is Heaven.
 My seas are stormy, and my ship doth leak ;
 My sailors rude ; my steersman faint and weak :
 My canvas torn, it flaps from side to side :
 My cable's crack'd, my anchor's slightly ty'd,
 My pilot's craz'd ; my shipwreck sands are cloak'd ;
 My bucket's broken, and my pump is chok'd ;
 My calm's deceitful ; and my gulph too near ;
 My wares are slubber'd, and my fare's too dear :
 My plummet's light, it cannot sink nor sound ;
 Oh, shall my rock-bethreaten'd soul be drown'd ?
 Lord, still the seas, and shield my ship from harm ;
 Instruct my sailors, guide my steersman's arm :
 Touch thou my compass, and renew my sails,
 Send stiffer courage or send milder gales ;
 Make strong my cable, bind my anchor faster ;
 Direct my pilot, and be thou his Master ;
 Object the sands to my most serious view,
 Make sound my bucket, bore my pump anew :
 New cast my plummet, make it apt to try
 Where the rocks lurk, and where the quicksands lie ;
 Guard thou the gulph with love, my calms with care ;
 Cleanse thou my freight ; accept my slender fare ;
 Refresh the sea-sick passenger ; cut short
 His voyage ; land him in his wish'd-for port :
 Thou, thou, whom winds and stormy seas obey,
 That through the deep gav'st grumbling Israel way,
 Say to my soul, be safe ; and then mine eye
 Shall scorn grim death, although grim death stand by !
 O thou, whose strength-reviving arm did cherish
 Thy sinking Peter, at the point to perish,
 Reach forth thy hand, or bid me tread the wave,
 I'll come, I'll come : the voice that calls will save ! "

You will find many good things in Quarles if you read carefully.
 You know how he pictures the worldling riding down hill on a
 stag, which he is spurring on as hard as he can, while the righteous
 man, on a donkey, is riding up the hill, and following a crawling
 snail. This is the emblem he gives :—

"Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."—
 John iii. 19.

"Lord, when we leave the world, and come to thee,
 How dull, how slug are we !
 How backward ! How prepost'rous is the motion
 Of our ungain devotion !

Our thoughts are millstones, and our souls are lead,
 And our desires are dead :
 Our vows are fairly promised, faintly paid ;
 Or broken, or not made :
 Our better work (if any good) attends
 Upon our private ends :
 In whose performance one poor worldly scoff
 Foils us, or beats us off.
 If thy sharp scourge find out some secret fault,
 We grumble or revolt ;
 And if thy gentle hand forbear, we stray,
 Or idly lose the way.
 Is the road fair, we loiter ; clogged with mire,
 We stick, or else retire :
 A lamb appears a lion ; and we fear,
 Each bush we see 's a bear.
 When our dull souls direct our thoughts to thee,
 As slow as snails are we :
 But at the earth we dart our wing'd desire ;
 We burn, we burn like fire.
 Like as the am'rous needle joys to bend
 To her magnetic friend :
 Or as the greedy lover's eye-balls fly
 At his fair mistress's eye :
 So, so we cling to earth ; we fly and puff,
 Yet fly not fast enough.
 If pleasure beckon with her balmy hand,
 Her beck's a strong command :
 If honour calls us with her courtly breath,
 An hour's delay is death :
 If profit's golden finger'd charm enveigles,
 We clip more swift than eagles :
 Let Auster weep, or blust'ring Boreas roar
 Till eyes or lungs be sore :
 Let Neptune swell, until his dropsy sides
 Burst into broken tides :
 Nor threat'ning rocks, nor winds, nor waves, nor fire,
 Can curb our fierce desire :
 Nor fire, nor rocks, can stop our furious minds,
 Nor waves nor winds :
 How fast and fearless do our footsteps flee !
 The light-foot roebuck's not so swift as we."

Quarles has a curious picture of a man's soul riding in a chariot drawn by a goat and a sheep, driven furiously by the devil, while the Lord Jesus Christ is pulling it back with a rope or chain. Upon this he writes :—

"Ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air."—Eph. ii. 2.

"O whither will this mad-brain world at last
 Be driven ? Where will her restless wheels arrive ?

- Why hurries on her ill-matched pair so fast?
 O whither means her furious groom to drive?
 What, will her rambling fits be never past?
 For ever ranging? Never once retrieve?
 Will earth's perpetual progress ne'er expire?
 Her team continuing in their fresh career:
 And yet they never rest, and yet they never tire.
- "Sol's hot-mouth'd steeds, whose nostrils vomit flame,
 And brazen lungs belch forth quotidian fire.
 Their twelve hours' task performed, grow stiff and lame,
 And their immortal spirits faint and tire;
 At th' azure mountain's foot their labours claim
 The privilege of rest, where they retire
 To quench their burning fetlocks, and go steep
 Their flaming nostrils in the Western deep,
 And 'fresh their tired souls with strength-restoring sleep.
- "But these prodigious hackneys, basely got
 'Twixt men and devils, made for race or flight,
 Can drag the idle world, expecting not
 The bed of rest, but travel with delight;
 Who never weighing way nor weather, trot
 Through dust and dirt, and droil both night and day;
 Thus droil these fiends incarnate, whose free pains
 Are fed with dropsies and venereal blains.
 No need to use the whip; but strength to rule the reins.
- "Poor captive world! How has thy lightness given
 A just occasion to thy foes illusion!
 Oh, how art thou betray'd, thus fairly driv'n
 In seeming triumph to thy own confusion!
 How is thy empty universe bereav'n
 Of all true joys, by one false joy's delusion!
 So I have seen an unblown virgin fed
 With sugar'd words so full, that she is led
 A fair attended bride to a false bankrupt's bed.
- "Pull, gracious Lord! Let not thine arm forsake
 The world, impounded in her own devices;
 Think of that pleasure that thou once did take
 Amongst the lilies and sweet beds of spices.
 Hale (haul) strongly, thou, whose hand has power to slack
 The swift-foot fury of ten thousand vices;
 Let not thy dust-devouring dragon boast,
 His craft has won what Judah's lion lost;
 Remember what is crav'd; recount the price it cost."

You cannot look through Quarles without finding something to help you to make metaphors and illustrations; therefore, I recommend you to be sure to get his *Emblems, Divine and Moral*.

There is also his little book, *Divine Fancies; Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations, and Observations* My copy is a quarto,

dated 1633, and, as you see, is bound in vellum ; you can probably get a modern reprint of it. There are some rare things in it, and some good things, too, such, for instance, as the parables of the waking conscience and the water-mill :—

ON A WAKING CONSCIENCE.

“ There is a kind of Conscience some men keepe,
Is like a Member that's benum'd with sleepe ;
Which, as it gathers Blood, and wakes agen,
It *shoots*, and *pricks*, and *feeles* as big as *ten*.”

ON A WATER-MILL

“ The formall Christian 's like a *Water-mill* :
Untill the *Floodgate's* open, he lyes still :
He cannot work at all ; he cannot dreame
Of going : till his wheelles shall finde the *streame*.”

There are plenty of good things like these. The work is divided into four books ; in each of the first three, there are just a hundred “fancies”, but the fourth book contains a hundred and seventeen. The author penned a remarkable dedication of his book, “To the Royall Budde of Majestie, and Center of all our Hopes and Happinesse, CHARLES, Prince of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland, Sonne and Heyre Apparant to the High and Mighty CHARLES, by the Grace of GOD, King of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland,” and an equally extraordinary address to the Countess of Dorset, governess to the royal infant ; but Quarles' Preface “to the readers” is more in our line. It is itself metaphorical, and therefore an extract from it will be appropriate just now. He says :—“I heere present thee with a *Hive of Bees* ; laden, some with *Waxe*, and some with *Honey*. Feare not to approach. There are no *Wasps* ; there are no *Hornets*, here : if some wanton *Bee* should chance to buzze about thine eares, stand thy Ground, and hold thy hands : there's none will sting thee, if thou strike not first. If any doe, she hath *Honey* in her *Bagge* will cure thee, too. In playner tearmes, I present thee with a Booke of Fancies ; among which, as I have none to boast of, so (I hope) I shall have none to blush at. All cannot affect all : if some please all ; or all, some, 'tis more than I expect.”

There came out, in these more modern days, a book of which I have not the title-page in my copy. I once sent it to the printers ; and you know, brethren, that there are some curious spirits that have their abode in printing-offices. This book was brought out by Mr. Tegg, and was, I believe, the work of a MR. BARBER, of

America. It is called, *Religious Emblems, Fables, and Allegories*, and has a Preface by Mr. James Smith, one of my predecessors at New Park Street Chapel, and afterwards minister at Cheltenham. The work is not worth much; if you do not find it, do not cry. It contains some of the most hideous woodcuts that ever were devised; the man who cut them ought to "cut his stick" for ever, and never cut any more. There is an illustration of a young man lying down in a bed of tulips and roses, with a book under his arm, and he is fast asleep on the edge of a precipice, which looks to me as if it went down three or four thousand miles. The text underneath is "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction" (Ps. lxxiii. 18). There is some poetry on it, here it is:—

CARNAL SECURITY.

"See here pourtrayed, a gently rising ground,
With tulips gay, and blooming roses crowned,
Where flowers of various hues, or gay or fair,
Mingle their sweetness with the balmy air;
While woodland minstrels stoop upon the wing,
Attune their notes, and softest carols sing;
A youth lies sleeping on the roseate bed,
Heedless of dangers, thus to ruin led;
A horrid gulf of thickest night is there,
Where hope ne'er comes, but darkness and despair;
A turn—a move—and in the gulf he'll roll,
Where fiery billows prey upon the soul."

I do not know how billows prey upon the soul, but I suppose that was necessary to the poetry. Still, there is the illustration of a young man lying upon the brink of a precipice. There are many more very curious things in this book. There is one that is not very beautiful, a picture of a man chained to a dead body, illustrating the text, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.) Quarles illustrated the same passage by putting the living person inside the ribs of a skeleton. In the picture in this book, a bird is represented as flying out of a cage, and this is the poetry explaining the text and the illustration:—

THE SOUL IN BONDAGE.

"Horror of horrors! what a sight is here!
Life linked with death, in terror and despair.
Thus cruel tyrants, when they won the field,
Were wont to punish those compelled to yield.
The wounded captive, writhing still with pain,
Was made to wear the adamant chain,

That round the limbs of one new-slain was led,
 And bound the living to the putrid dead,
 Till, choked with stench, the lingering victim lay,
 And breathed in agony his life away.

'Tis thus the soul, enlighten'd by the Word,
 Descries the path that upward leads to God,
 And fain would run, but feels a galling chain
 That quickly drags him to the world again;
 Corruption's body opens to his eye,
 He sees the cause, but oh! he cannot fly.
 Who, who! he asks, with trembling, struggling breath,
 Will save me from this fearful mass of death?
 He calls on Moses now to break his chain,
 Moses is deaf,—he calls on him in vain;
 He calls on Jesus,—wondrous name!—he hears,
 And breaks his chain, and scatters all his fears.
 Now like the bird that from its prison flies,
 On wings of love soars upward to the skies."

Another grand book in its way is that of KRUMMACHER,—*The Parables of Frederic Adolphus Krummacher, translated from the seventh German edition.* This is not the Krummacher who wrote *Elijah* and *Elisha*; but the father of that good man. Many of the pieces in this book are not such as you could use; they are imitations of the inspired records of Biblical events, and I should not like to hear them repeated. I hardly think this sort of thing is allowable. I will give you two or three specimens that you may know what they are like:—

JOHN AND PETER.

"John and Peter were once talking of former times when the Lord was yet with them, and they began also to speak of the day when the Lord was anointed at Bethany. Then Peter said: 'Dost thou remember how seriously Christ looked at Judas, when he said: "Why has not this ointment been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?"' And at us he looked kindly though we approved of the saying of Judas.'

"Then John said: 'I questioned the Master concerning it. Then he said to me: "You did not speak rightly; but in the integrity of your heart you spoke sincerely. How could I be wroth with you, and not reprove you mildly? But Judas lacked the chief virtue—truthfulness." Thus he said.' And John added: 'Did he not, a short time after, betray the Master with a kiss?'

"Thus said the disciple whom Jesus loved. In the eyes of the grave Peter tears were glistening, for he remembered that he also had once been a traitor to truth."

I do not think, brethren, that anyone has the right to put such a *story* as that into the mouth of any man mentioned in the Scriptures.

Here is another of Krummacher's supposed conversations between Biblical characters:—

THE WONDER.

"One day in spring, the youth Solomon was sitting under the palm-trees in the gardens of his father the king, and he looked to the earth in profound meditation. Then came to him Nathan, his tutor, saying: 'Why musest thou so earnestly under the palm-trees?'

"The youth lifted up his head, and answered: 'Nathan, I would see a wonder.' The prophet smiled, and answered: 'The same wish had I also in the days of my youth.'

"'And was it fulfilled?' asked the king's son hastily.

"'A man of God', continued Nathan, 'came to me, having a pomegranate seed in his hand. "Behold," said he, "what will come from this seed." Then with his finger he made a hole in the earth, planted the seed, and covered it. When he withdrew his hand, the clods parted one from another, and I saw two small leaves coming forth. But scarcely had I beheld them, when they joined together, and became a round stem wrapped in bark, and the stem increased before my eyes, and grew higher and thicker.

"'Then the man of God said to me: "Give heed!" And as I looked, I saw seven branches spread forth from the stem, like the seven arms of the candlestick on the altar.

"'I marvelled; but the man of God motioned me to keep silence, and give heed. "Behold," said he, "new creations will begin."

"'Then he took water in the hollow of his hand from the rivulet by the wayside, and sprinkled the branches three times; and lo, now the branches were covered with green leaves, so that a cool shade surrounded us, and sweet odours. "From whence," cried I, "come this perfume, and this reviving shade?"

"'Dost thou not see," said the man of God, "the crimson flowers bursting from among the green leaves, and hanging in clusters?"

"'I was about to speak, but a gentle breeze moved the leaves, scattering the flowers around us, like as when snow descendeth from the clouds. Scarcely had the falling flowers reached the ground, when I saw the ruddy pomegranates hanging between the leaves, like the almonds on Aaron's rod.

"'Then the man of God left me lost in amazement.'

"Nathan was silent, and Solomon asked hastily: 'Where is he? What is the name of the man of God? Is he yet alive?'

"Then Nathan replied: 'Son of David, I have spoken to thee of a vision.' When Solomon heard these words, he was grieved in his heart, and said: 'How canst thou deceive me thus?'

"But Nathan replied: 'I have not deceived thee, offspring of Jesse. Behold, in the garden of thy father thou mayest see in reality what I told thee. Does not the same happen to the pomegranate trees and all other trees?'

"'Yes,' said Solomon, 'but imperceptibly, and throughout a long time.' Then Nathan answered: 'Is it less by divine influence because it cometh to pass in silence and unheeded? It seemeth to me all the more divine. Learn to know Nature and her workings; then wilt thou

gladly believe in a higher power, and long no more for a wonder performed by the hand of man.'

"The kingly youth stood for a while in thought, and held his peace. Then he turned to the prophet, and said: 'I thought upon the wonder whereof the book of the law beareth witness, the budding and blooming almond-staff of Aaron. Behold, it was of such a wonder that I spoke. It was a dry stick, like unto the staves of the other tribes of Israel; and yet it bloomed and budded in a single night, and bore almonds in the tabernacle. Doth it still bloom?' asked Solomon. And Nathan answered and said: 'Of a truth, in the priesthood of Aaron and his tribe, and in due season it will bloom and bud yet more beautifully. For is it not an immortal and a heavenly thing, ordained of Jehovah, a token of his mercy and of his covenant, whereunto the almond staff bore witness?' 'I understand thy saying, man of God,' said the youth, blushing. 'If the heavenly, the immortal, is to be manifested, then—then the dead almond branch, though it hath neither root nor sap, must bloom as in the days of spring.'

"'And I, too, understand thee, Jedidiah,' answered Nathan; and he smiled kindly upon the king's son, and grasped his hand."

Now that would have been a very pretty parable if it had been given without the introduction of a dialogue between Nathan and Solomon. I will give you only one more of these parables:—

THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM.

"When the days of Abraham, the godly patriarch, drew towards their close, he lay down, old, and weary of life, on his bed, and called to him his children and his children's children, and they stood in a circle around him. Then the patriarch said, with a cheerful countenance: 'Children, the God in whom I have believed now calls me!'—and he blessed them. But his children wept, and said: 'Ah, would that the hour might pass thee by once more!'

"But he answered: 'Not so, my beloved. If I have walked all the days of my life before God in uprightness and love, how should I hesitate to go to him now that he calleth me?' And when he had said this, he bent his head, and expired. And the form of the dead man was as the form of one that sleepeth."

Well, now, to my mind, that sort of writing is not permissible: some might admire it, but I have a very grave question about the propriety of it. There is in it a trenching upon holy ground which does not strike me as being right. Yet Krummacher's parables, with this exception, are many of them remarkably beautiful. This one is very pretty:—

THE ROBIN.

"A robin came in the depth of winter to the window of a pious peasant, as if it would like to come in. Then the peasant opened his window, and took the confiding little creature kindly into his house. So it picked up the crumbs that fell from his table, and his children

loved and cherished the little bird. But when spring returned, and the bushes and trees put forth leaves, the peasant opened his window, and the little guest flew into the neighbouring wood, built its nest, and sang merrily. And, behold, at the return of winter, the robin came back to the house of the peasant, and its mate came with it. The man and his children were very glad when they saw the two little birds, which looked at them so confidently with their bright eyes. And the children said: 'The little birds look at us as if they were going to say something.' Then their father answered: 'If they could speak, they would say: Kind confidence awakens kind confidence, and love begets love.'

Now that is a charming little parable. Here is another:—

THE LIGHT OF HOME.

"A traveller was hastening from a distant land to his native country. His heart was filled with hope and joy, for he had not seen his parents and brothers for many years; therefore, he hurried greatly. But when he was on the mountains, night overtook him, and it was so dark that he could hardly see the staff in his hand. When he came down into the valley, he lost his way, and wandered a long time to the right and to the left; then he was very sad, and sighed, 'Oh! would that a human being might meet me to relieve me in this trouble, and bring me on the right way! How grateful should I be!' Thus he said, and stopped, waiting for a guide. As the way-worn pilgrim was standing there, full of doubts and anxiety, behold, a twinkling light gleamed from afar through the darkness, and its glimmer seemed lovely to him in the dark night. 'Welcome,' he exclaimed, 'thou messenger of peace, thou givest me the assurance that a human being is nigh. Thy faint gleam through the darkness of night is sweet to me as the sunrise.' He hastened to reach the distant light, fancying that he saw the man who was carrying it. But, lo, it was a will-o'-the-wisp rising from a fen, and hovering over the stagnant pool; thus the man drew nigh to the verge of destruction.

"Suddenly a voice behind him exclaimed: 'Stop, or thou art a dead man!' He stopped, and looked around; it was a fisherman, who called to him from his boat. 'Why,' asked he, 'shall I not follow the kindly guiding light? I have lost my way.' 'The guiding light,' said the fisherman, 'callest thou thus the deluding glimmer which draws the wanderer into danger and destruction? Evil subterranean powers create from the noisome bogs the nightly vapour which imitates the glimmer of the friendly light. Behold how restlessly it flutters about, the evil offspring of night and darkness.' While he thus spoke, the deceptive light vanished. After it had expired, the weary traveller thanked the fisherman heartily for preserving him. And the fisherman answered and said: 'Should one man leave another in error, and not help him into the right way? We have both reason to thank God: I, that he made me the instrument to do thee good; thou, that I was ordained to be at this hour in my boat on the water.'

"Then the good-natured fisherman left his boat, accompanied the traveller for a while, and brought him on the right way to reach his father's house. Now he walked on cheerily, and soon the light of home gleamed through the trees with its quiet modest radiance, appearing to him doubly welcome after the troubles and dangers he had undergone.

He knocked ; the door was opened, and his father and mother, brothers and sisters, came to meet him, and hung on his neck and kissed him, weeping for joy."

It is rather long and very descriptive, but there are some beautiful things in it, and useful lessons, too.

Here is another of Krummacher's parables :—

THE GUIDE.

"A wanderer had to go a long and dangerous journey over a rugged and rocky mountain, and knew not the way. He asked a traveller for information, of whom he heard that he had come this same path. The traveller pointed out the road to him clearly and distinctly, together with all the by-ways and precipices of which he must beware, and the rocks which he should climb ; moreover, he gave him a leaf of paper, on which all these things were described skilfully and exactly. The wanderer observed all this attentively, and at each turn and by-path he considered carefully the instructions and descriptions of his friend. Vigorously he proceeded ; but the more he advanced, the steeper the rocks appeared, and the way seemed to lose itself in the lonely dreary ravines. Then his courage failed him ; anxiously he looked up to the towering gray rocks, and cried : 'It is impossible for man to ascend so steep a path, and to climb these rugged rocks ; the wings of eagles and the feet of the mountain-goat alone can do it.'

"He turned away, thinking to return by the way he had come, when suddenly he heard a voice exclaiming : 'Take courage, and follow me !' He looked round, and to his joyful surprise he beheld the man who had pointed out the way to him. He saw him walk calmly and steadily between the ravines and precipices, and the rushing mountain-torrents. This inspired him with new confidence, and he followed vigorously. Before nightfall they had ascended the mountain, and a lovely valley, where blossomed myrtle and pomegranate trees, received them at the end of their pilgrimage. Then the cheerful wanderer thanked his friend, and said : 'How can I express my gratitude to thee ? Thou hast not only guided me on the right way, but hast also given me strength and courage to persevere.' The other answered : 'Not so ; am I not a wanderer like thyself, and art thou not the same man as before ? Thou hast only seen by my example what thou art, and what thou art able to do.'"

How beautifully you might use that parable to show how Jesus Christ gives us great power, not merely by precept but by example, not only guiding us, but going out with us in the way, and showing us where we ought to go, and what we ought to do.

These extracts will give you an idea of Krummacher's style ; there are many more very pretty parables in his book. I have marked two others that I think I must read to you :—

THE MAGNETIC NEEDLE.

"A Society of learned men caused a ship to be built, and resolved to

make a voyage to discover the wonderful nature and properties of the magnetic needle. When the ship was ready to sail, they went on board, taking with them a great number of books, and all kinds of instruments; then they set a magnetic needle in the midst, and examined and observed it. Thus they sailed, to and fro, looking at the needle, and each had his own opinion concerning the hidden power which moves the needle.

"Some called this secret power a stream, others a breath, others, again, a spirit; some asserted that it moved from the south to the north, others said from the north to the south. So a violent contest arose among the learned men, and they sailed to and fro on the ocean, quarrelling with each other. Suddenly they felt a rude shock, and a violent crash was heard. The ship had struck on a rock and split, and the waves were rushing impetuously in. Then the learned men were all seized with great terror and confusion; they left the needle, jumped overboard, and saved themselves on the rocks. The ship was buried in the waves.

"Now, as they sat on the barren rocks, wet through with salt water, they cried out to one another that there was no dependence to be placed in the magnetic needle!"

Krummacher gives no explanation of this parable; but, taking religion to be the needle, you have men fighting and quarrelling about it, not following its divine guidance, nor yielding themselves to it; and then, when things go amiss, people cry out, "Oh! that is your religion." No, these learned men did not make a proper use of the needle. If they had followed its pointing, and so discovered which way they were sailing, and consulted a proper chart, they would have been right enough. It was their own folly that led them into mischief.

That is a high class of parable, mark you, and requires a superior mind to give it from the pulpit; such a superior mind as all of you, brethren, possess.

Another parable of a similar character is the last one I will give you from Krummacher:—

THE COURSE OF THE BROOK.

"Behold the course of yonder brook," said a teacher to his disciples. "Strongly and calmly it streams through the valley and the meadows, reflecting the image of the blue sky in the mirror of its clear waves. It waters the roots of the trees and shrubs that grow by its side, and its cool exhalations refresh the flowers and grass-blades round about.

"Then it flows through a barren tract of land, full of sand and gravel; there its blessings end.

"Yet it continues to be the same clear brook, fraught with blessings, though no one enjoys its bounty.

"Behold, a wild boar rushes in, parting the sparkling waves. The animal drinks from the floods, which cool his burning sides; the mud, raised by the sudden commotion, sinks again to the bottom.

“‘Now a weary wanderer bends over the limpid crystal, quenches his thirst, and cools his glowing brow; then hastens on, refreshed and grateful.

“‘Where is the source and origin of the lovely brook?

“‘Look up yonder! Dost thou see the towering peak of the mountain, and the cave surrounded by rugged rocks? There, in the deep bosom of the earth, is the hidden spring of the brook.

“‘But from whence come the never-failing source and the inexhaustible supply?

“‘Behold, the top of the mountain touches the vault of heaven, veiled by the dewy clouds.

“‘Where is the end of the brook?

“‘Ever increasing as it rolls onward, it falls into the arms of the ocean; from thence it returns to the clouds.’

“Thus said the master; and his disciples recognized the image of heavenly love and its agency on earth.”

For good parables, let me once more recommend to you SPENCER’S *Things New and Old*, which teems with them, as it abounds also in the allegories and illustrations I have already introduced to you from its pages. Here is an instructive parable on wasps and bees:—

AN IDLE MAN YIELDING TO THE LEAST TEMPTATION.

“Set a narrow-mouthed glass near to a bee-hive, and you shall soon perceive how busily the wasps resort to it, being drawn thither by the smell of that sweet liquor wherewith it is baited; and how eagerly they creep into the mouth of it, and fall down suddenly from that slippery steepness into that watery trap, from which they can never rise, but, after some vain labour and weariness, they drown and die. Now, there are none of the bees that so much as look that way; they pass directly to their hive, without taking any notice of such a pleasing bait. Thus, idle and ill-disposed persons are easily drawn away with every temptation; they have both leisure and will to entertain every sweet allure-ment to sin, and wantonly prosecute their own wicked lusts, till they fall into irrecoverable damnation; whereas the diligent and laborious Christian, that follows hard and conscionably the works of an honest calling, is free from the danger of those deadly enticements, and lays up honey of comfort against the winter of evil.”

Supposing that you have SPENCER’S *Things New and Old*, and supposing that you have wit, which is not quite the same thing, I would recommend you to buy GOTTHOLD’S *Emblems: or, Invisible Things Understood by Things that are Made*. By Christian Sriver, Minister of Magdeburg in 1671. You cannot make a better investment than that even if you get married; in fact, that may be a bad investment if you make it too soon, or not wisely. This English translation of Gotthold was originally issued by Messrs. T. and T. Clark, of Edinburgh, in two volumes; but there is now

a good edition in one volume. There is an emblem, with a meditation thereon for every day of the year. Some of Gotthold's emblems cannot be correctly classed with parables. There are some that are emblems, others are really fables, some are expanded metaphors, but there are also many parables. Take this one, in which a delicate stomach is put as the representative of a sensitive conscience.

THE WEAK STOMACH.

February 9.

"A pious man complained of a pain in his stomach, and being asked the cause, replied: 'I was recently at an entertainment, where I was importunately pressed to eat, and by so doing, exceeded my usual measure. The consequence is that my stomach is angry, and seeks to revenge itself, and punish me.' *Gotthold* observed: Mark the emblem, which you have within yourself, of pious and conscientious men. They cannot bear the smallest excess. Not merely do they heartily repugn actual sin, but sicken if they have been guilty of the least neglect. Their heart beats, their conscience stings and quails them, and they find no peace until, by true repentance, they are reconciled to God through Christ."

If I read you one or two more of *Gotthold's* emblems, you will understand how it was that the author, CHRISTIAN SCRIVER, was so popular. In the translator's Preface, we are told that "the Queen of Sweden (at that time the first and most powerful Protestant kingdom in the world) invited him to be her spiritual guide and court preacher at Stockholm, and wept, and was inconsolable, when, feeling the infirmities of age, and, prompted by modesty and attachment to his flock and sorely-afflicted fatherland, he declined the honourable call." No book ever sold, I think, so much in the Christian world as *Gotthold's Emblems*, except *BOGATSKY'S Golden Treasury*, and some English books, such as *DODDRIDGE'S Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, and *BAXTER'S Saint's Everlasting Rest*. Here is another of *Gotthold's* emblems:—

SUBSIDED MUD.

April 24.

"In a vessel filled with muddy water, the thickness visibly subsided to the bottom, and left the water purer and purer, until at last it seemed perfectly limpid. The slightest motion, however, brought the sediment again to the top, and the water became thick and turbid as before. Here, said *Gotthold*, when he saw it, we have an emblem of the human heart. The heart is full of the mud of sinful lusts and carnal desires, and the consequence is, that no pure water—that is, good and holy thoughts—can flow from it. It is, in truth, a miry pit and slough of sin, in which all sorts of ugly reptiles are bred and crawl. Many a one, however, is deceived by it, and never imagines his heart half so wicked

as it really is, because sometimes its lusts are at rest, and sink, as it were, to the bottom. On such occasions, his thoughts are apparently devout and holy, his desires pure and temperate, his words charitable and edifying, and his works useful and Christian. But this lasts only so long as he is not moved; I mean, so long as he is without opportunity or incitement to sin. Let that occur, and worldly lusts rise so thick, that his whole thoughts, words, and works, show no trace of anything but slime and impurity. One is meek as long as he is not thwarted; cross him, and he is like powder, ignited by the smallest spark, and blazing up with a loud report and destructive effect. Another is temperate so long as he has no jovial companions; a third chaste while the eyes of men are upon him.

"Alas, my God! How often have I fancied that the world and all its lusts were a thousand miles away, and yet afterwards discovered that, like a crafty foe, she had kept quiet only to attack and beguile me unawares. Often, in my communings with thee, I have vowed that I would be courteous and friendly to the man by whom I had been injured, and would show it by my deportment. Nay, if required at the time, I would have confirmed my vows with any number of oaths; and yet I have afterwards found that the very sight of him so violently stirred and agitated my heart, that nothing was visible in it but the mire of enmity. O my God, purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow! *Create in me a clean heart* (Psalm li. 10)."

Now that is a very gracious thought, beautifully expressed. (Gotthold's emblems are all sweet like that, full of matter and marrow. Here is another:—

THE SPOILT PEN.

April 25.

"A lady of rank, having occasion to write a letter, took up a pen, which she found unfit for the purpose, and attempted to mend. In this operation, however, she happened to blot the paper, which provoked her to such a pitch that she struck the pen with violence upon the table, and spoilt it. *Gotthold* witnessed the scene, and said, with a smile: Nothing is more common in life than to find people acting in this manner. They cast away, break, and destroy their instruments, when these do not serve them agreeably to their wishes. By this, however, they only show how just and right it would be in the Supreme Author of all good things, intending, as he does, that we should be the instruments of his grace and will, but finding us unprofitable, and even obstinate and refractory, were he to reject us in his wrath, and dash us in pieces in his hot displeasure. Why should that be wrong in him, which seems to be right in us? But he is God and not man, and so great and tender is his mercy, that he does not execute the fierceness of his wrath, nor turn to destroy us utterly. (Hosea xi. 8, 9.)

"Thou God of mercy, I can form no better conception of thy long-suffering than by surveying my own brief life, and marking the rich display of it towards myself. But when I figure the vast multitude of unbelievers who daily and hourly offend thee, but nevertheless continually desire and continually enjoy thy goodness, my soul sinks as in

a deep ocean, and all I mourn for is that there is one who does not love thee, who art love itself."

I hope you will learn from these extracts, which are fair specimens, that GOTTHOLD's *Emblems* will be invaluable to you.

There is a little book, called, *Spiritual Fables, Apologues, and Allegories, in Prose and Verse, by E. B.*, published in 1869, by Messrs. Reeves and Turner. The good man who wrote it has not put his name in full, he has given only his initials.—E. B.,—but I happen to know that his name was EDWIN BOWDEN, and that he was an invalided Congregational minister at Heavitree, Exeter. His work is a book of fables, but the fables are very good, and those that are not fables are parables. Here is one:—

CAMOMILES.

"'You smell delightfully fragrant,' said the Gravel-walk to a bed of Camomile flowers under the window. 'We have been trodden on,' replied the Camomiles. 'Does that cause it?' asked the Gravel-walk. 'Treading on *me* produces no sweetness.' 'Our natures are different,' answered the Camomiles. 'Gravel-walks become only the harder by being trodden upon; but the effect on our own selves is, if pressed and bruised when the dew is upon us, to give forth the sweet smell which you now perceive.' 'Very delightful,' replied the Gravel."

That is no fable, you see; the camomile does smell when trodden upon, the gravel paths do not.

This is another of Mr. Bowden's spiritual fables:—

EBB AND FLOW.

"'Mother,' said a little Limpet sticking to the rock, 'Mother, what has become of the sea? I am so dry here.' 'Nothing unusual has taken place, dear,' said the old Limpet, affectionately. 'Oh, it was so nice to be in the deep water,' said the little one. 'Is the sea all gone?' 'It will come again by-and-by, love,' replied the kind old Limpet, who had had long experience of ebb and flow. 'But I am so thirsty, and almost faint, the sea has been away so long.' 'Only wait awhile in hope, little one; hold fast to the rock, and the tide will soon come back to us.' And it *did* come, it *soon* came, rolling up the beach, and humming over the sands, making little pools, and forming tiny rivers in the hollows; and then it rolled up against the rocks, and at last it came to the Limpet, bathed it with its reviving waters, and so amply supplied its wants that it went to sleep in peace, forgetting its troubles.

"Religious feeling has its ebbings and flowings. But when former sensible comforts are departed, still to hold fast unto the immovable, unchangeable rock, Christ Jesus, is the soul's support and safety. Love mourns the absence of spiritual enjoyments. 'Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?' (Ps. lxxvii. 7-9.)

It is then that Faith checks fears, and encourages confidence in God. 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' (Ps. xlii. 11.)"

Here is one more extract from E. B.'s book:—

SOFTENING.

"'Unaccountable this!' said the Wax, as from the flame it dropped melting upon the paper beneath. 'Do not grieve,' said the Taper, 'I am sure it is all right.' 'I was never in such agony!' exclaimed the Wax, still dropping. 'It is not without a good design, and will end well,' replied the Taper. The Wax was unable to reply at the moment owing to a strong pressure; and when it again looked up, it bore a beautiful impression, the counterpart of the seal which had been applied to it. 'Ah! I comprehend now,' said the Wax, no longer in suffering, 'I was softened in order to receive this lovely, durable impress. Yes, I see now it was all right, because it has given to me the beautiful likeness which I could not otherwise have obtained.'

"Afflictions are in the hand of the Holy Spirit to effect the softening of the heart in order to receive heavenly impressions. Job said: 'God maketh my heart soft' (xxiii. 16). As the Wax in its naturally hard state cannot take the impress of the signet, and needs to be melted to render it susceptible, so the believer is by sanctified trials prepared to receive and made to bear the divine likeness. 'In whom also after that ye believed (says the Apostle), ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise' (Eph. i. 13), 'Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts' (2 Cor. i. 22)."

I have heard WITHER'S *Emblems* strongly recommended, but I cannot join in the recommendation. The title of the book is rather curious:—*A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne: Quickened with Metricall Illustrations, both Morall & Divine: and Disposed into Lotteries, that Instruction, and Good Counsell, may bee furthered by an Honest and Pleasant Recreation. By George Wither.* The pictures at the top of the pages are some of them remarkable; but the emblems are, to my mind, very poor things. I looked through the book to see if there was anything worth reading to you, and I found this parable:—

THE TRAVELLER ON THE ICE.

"A traveller, when he must undertake
To seek his passage, o'er some *Frozen Lake*,
With *leisure*, and with *care*, he will assay
The glassy smoothnesse of that *Icic-way*,
Lest he may *slip*, by walking over-fast,
Or, breake the crackling *Pavement*, by his *hast*:
And, so (for want of better taking heed)
Incurre the mischiefes of *Unwary-speed*.

We are all *Travellers*; and, all of us
 Have many passages, as dangerous,
 As *Frozen-lakes*; and, *Slippery-ways*, we tread,
 In which our Lives may soon be forfeited,
 (With all our hopes of *Life-eternall*, too,)
 Unless we well consider what we doe.
 There is no private *Way*, or publicke *Path*,
 But rubs, or holes, or slipp'nesse it hath,
 Whereby, wee shall with *Mischiefes* meet; unlesse,
 'Vee walke it, with a *stedfast warinesse*.

The steps to *Honour*, are on *Pinacles*
 Composed of melting Snow, and Isicles;
 And, they who tread not nicely on their tops,
 Shall on a suddaine slip from all their *hopes*.
 Yea, ev'n that way, which is both sure and holy,
 And leades the Minde from Vanities and Folly,
 Is with so many other *Path-ways* crost,
 As, that, by Rashnesse, it may soon be lost;
 Unless. we well deliberate, upon
 Those *Tracts*, in which our *Ancestours* have gone.
 And, they, who with more *haste* than *heed* will runne,
 May lose the way, in which they well begunne."

Last of all, there is a book, entitled, *Moral Emblems, with Aphorisms, Adages, and Proverbs of All Ages and Nations, from Jacob Cats and Robert Farlie*, published by Messrs. Longman, Green, and Co. Farlie wrote a book on Candles, which greatly assisted me in the preparation of my Lecture on "Sermons in Candles"; Jacob Cats, a Dutchman, wrote a book on emblems; and Mr. Richard Pigot has translated them into English. The work is published, with splendid engravings and magnificent letterpress, in a very handsome binding, for about twenty-five or thirty shillings; therefore, brethren, I do not suppose it will come in the way of most of you; for with that amount you can purchase many books that will be more useful to you. It has a great many good things in it, very good proverbs, fables, and so on, though, perhaps, not so good as some you have heard this afternoon. They are in poetry; here is one:—

HASTEN AT LEISURE.

"The Peach-tree, with too eager haste
 To show its blossoms to the sun,
 Gives off its pretty bloom to waste,
 Before the frosts of Spring are done.
 Much wiser is the Mulberry,
 Which only thinks its leaves to show,
 When leaves are green on every tree,
 And roses have begun to blow.

" They most ensure success and praise,
 Who, guided by the rule of reason,
 Do fitting things on fitting days,
 And dress as most becomes the season."

Here is another of Jacob Cats' emblems:—

ONE ROTTEN APPLE INFECTS ALL IN THE BASKET.

" Fair maid ! who comes so oft this way,
 Your fruit of me to buy,
 In guerdon of your kindness, pray,
 Before my fruit you try,
 Give ear to what I have to say,
 For I would service do
 To such as buy of me to-day,
 Good customers like you.
 Full many years have I sold fruit,
 And well its nature know ;
 As that of every herb and root
 That in the garden grow ;
 And this I've found, and heard it, too,
 From all who fruit have grown,
 However fine and fresh to view,
 The good, keep best alone.
 No rotten pear, however slight
 The token of decay,
 But soon as e'er it meets the sight,
 It should be thrown away ;
 For be the damage e'er so small,
 In little time I've known,
 The taint will often spread to all,
 From that one pear alone.
 I've had of Jargonels a lot,
 As sound as fruit could be,
 All from one apple take the rot,
 And prove sad loss to me.
 Nor is there fruit that ever grew,
 When spoil'd in any part,
 But soon spoils all that's near it, too,
 So take these truths to heart !
 A tainted grape the bunch may spoil ;
 A mildew'd ear, the corn in shock ;
 A scabby sheep, with rot and boil,
 Infect and kill the finest flock.
 Hence, maiden, I would have you know
 The ill that evil contact brings
 To all the finest fruits that grow,
 And fairest maids, like other things.
 Seek only all that's good to learn ;
 Thine ears from evil counsel turn ;
 For all the more the fruit is fair,
 The greater is its need of care."

The final emblem, from Cats, is hardly a spiritual one; but it will show you that you need not be afraid of public opinion, and it will remind you of something of which I have had my full share, and which may fall to your lot in due season:—

THE GOOSE HISSES WELL, BUT IT DOESN'T BITE.

"When first these Geese I saw, and heard
 Them hiss so fierce at me;
 With fear o'erwhelm'd, I fled the bird,
 And thought therein to see
 Some wingèd beast, or dragon fell,
 Whose pestilential breath
 Alone sufficed, as I'd heard tell,
 To spread dismay and death.
 At length, their snappish noise despite,
 I felt within my breast
 A strange resolve to stay my flight,
 And meet them at my best.
 So looking round as fiercely, too,
 I was about to draw,
 And pierce the hissing monsters through;
 When all at once I saw—
 And said, as plain as I could speak:
 'Why, I'm a fool outright!
 The beast's a flat and toothless beak!
 With that he cannot bite;
 No claws upon his feet has he
 That I had need to fear,
 No crooked talons that I see
 With which my flesh to tear.
 'Tis all mere empty wind, e'en though
 So dread to th' ear and sight;
 Fear not, my mates!—who hiss and blow
 Are seldom fierce to bite.'"

Thus I have mentioned to you a considerable variety of works. If you manage to get some of them, you will probably have to be satisfied. *Gotthold's Emblems* are the best of all; they are really first-rate. You must get that little book by *E. B.*, if you can. *John Bunyan's Emblems* you will find in his works; and *Flavel's*, in his. *Austen* you may not very readily get; but *Quarles*, *Spencer*, and *Æsop*, you can and ought to buy. *Krummacher's* style is very pretty, and tasteful; but he uses more words than I relish. I like *Gotthold* most, he has not a word too many; I think that you also will be pleased when you have got hold of him.

I will not keep you any longer this afternoon; I only hope that I have been able to direct you to some books that will be really helpful to you in finding Fables, Emblems, and Parables.

LECTURE VII.

The Sciences as Sources of Illustration.

ASTRONOMY.

I PROPOSE, brethren, if I am able to do it,—and I am somewhat dubious upon that point,—to give you a set of lectures at intervals upon THE VARIOUS SCIENCES AS SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATION. It seems to me that every student for the Christian ministry ought to know at least something of every science; he should intermeddle with every form of knowledge that may be useful in his life's work. God has made all things that are in the world to be our teachers, and there is something to be learned from every one of them; and as he would never be a thorough student who did not attend all classes at which he was expected to be present, so he who does not learn from all things that God has made will never gather all the food that his soul needs, nor will he be likely to attain to that perfection of mental manhood which will enable him to be a fully-equipped teacher of others.

I shall commence with the science of ASTRONOMY; and you will, at the beginning, understand that I am not going to deliver an astronomical lecture, nor to mention all the grand facts and details of that fascinating science; but I intend simply to use *astronomy as one of the many fields of illustration that the Lord has provided for us*. Let me say, however, that the science itself is one which ought to receive much attention from all of us. It relates to many of the greatest wonders in nature, and its effect upon the mind is truly marvellous. The themes on which astronomy discourses are so grand, the wonders disclosed by the telescope are so sublime that, very often, minds that have been unable to receive knowledge through other channels have become remarkably receptive while they have been studying this science. There is an instance of a brother, who was one of the students in this College, and who

seemed to be a dreadful dolt; we really thought he never would learn anything, and that we should have to give him up in despair. But I introduced to him a little book called *The Young Astronomer*; and he afterwards said that, as he read it, he felt just as if something had cracked inside his head, or as if some string had been snapped. He had laid hold of such enlarged thoughts that I believe his cranium did actually experience an expansion which it ought to have undergone in his childhood, and which it did undergo by the marvellous force of the thoughts suggested by the study of even the elements of astronomical science.

This science ought to be the special delight of ministers of the gospel, for surely it brings us into closer connection with God than almost any other science does. It has been said that an undevout astronomer is mad. I should say that an undevout man of any sort is mad,—with the worst form of madness; but, certainly, he who has become acquainted with the stars in the heavens, and who yet has not found out the great Father of lights, the Lord who made them all, must be stricken with a dire madness. Notwithstanding all his learning, he must be afflicted with a mental incapacity which places him almost below the level of the beasts that perish.

Kepler, the great mathematical astronomer, who has so well explained many of the laws which govern the universe, closes one of his books, his *Harmonics*, with this reverent and devout expression of his feelings:—"I give thee thanks, Lord and Creator, that thou hast given me joy through thy creation; for I have been ravished with the work of thy hands. I have revealed unto mankind the glory of thy works, as far as my limited spirit could conceive their infinitude. Should I have brought forward anything that is unworthy of thee, or should I have sought my own fame, be graciously pleased to forgive me." And you know how the mighty Newton, a very prince among the sons of men, was continually driven to his knees as he looked upwards to the skies, and discovered fresh wonders in the starry heavens. Therefore, the science which tends to bring men to bow in humility before the Lord should always be a favourite study with us whose business it is to inculcate reverence for God in all who come under our influence.

The science of astronomy would never have become available to us in many of its remarkable details if it had not been for the discovery or invention of the *telescope*. Truth is great, but it does

not savingly affect us till we become personally acquainted with it. The knowledge of the gospel, as it is revealed to us in the Word of God, makes it true to us; and oftentimes the Bible is to us what the telescope is to the astronomer. The Scriptures do not make the truth; but they reveal it in a way in which our poor, feeble intellect, when enlightened by the Holy Spirit, is able to behold and comprehend it.

From a book* to which I am indebted for many quotations in this lecture, I learn that the telescope was discovered in this singular manner:—"A maker of spectacles, at Middleburg, stumbled upon the discovery owing to his children directing his attention to the enlarged appearance of the weathercock of a church, as accidentally seen through two spectacle-glasses, held between the fingers some distance apart. This was one of childhood's inadvertent acts; and seldom has there been a parallel example of mighty results springing out of such a trivial circumstance. It is strange to reflect upon the playful pranks of boyhood being connected in their issue, and at no distant date, with enlarging the known bounds of the planetary system, resolving the nebula of Orion, and revealing the richness of the firmament." In a similar way, a simple incident has often been the means of revealing to men the wonders of divine grace. What a certain individual only meant to be trifling with divine things, God has overruled for his soul's salvation. He stepped in to hear a sermon as he might have gone to the theatre to see a play; but God's Spirit carried the truth to his heart, and revealed to him the deep things of the kingdom, and his own personal interest in them.

I think that incident of the discovery of the telescope might be usefully employed as an illustration of the connection between little causes and great results, showing how the providence of God is continually making small things to be the means of bringing about wonderful and important revolutions. It may often happen that what seems to us to be a matter of pure accident, with nothing at all notable about it, may really have the effect of changing the entire current of our life, and it may be influential also in turning the lives of many others in quite a new direction.

When once the telescope had been discovered, then the numbers and position and movements of the stars became increasingly visible, until at the present time we are able to study the wonders of the

* *The Heavens and the Earth.* A Popular Handbook of Astronomy. By Thomas Milner, M.A., F.R.G.S. Religious Tract Society. (Now out of print.)

stellar sky, and continually to learn more and more of the marvels that are there displayed by the hand of God. The telescope has revealed to us much more of the sun, and the moon, and the stars, than we could ever have discovered without its aid. Dr. Livingstone, on account of his frequently using the sextant when he was travelling in Africa, was spoken of by the natives as the white man who could bring down the sun, and carry it under his arm. That is what the telescope has done for us, and that is what faith in the gospel has done for us in the spiritual heavens; it has brought down to us the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and given us the high eternal things to be our present possession, and our perpetual joy.

Thus, you see, the telescope itself may be made to furnish us with many valuable illustrations. We may also turn to good account the lessons to be learned by the study of the stars for the purpose of navigation. The mariner, crossing the trackless sea, by taking astronomical observations, can steer himself with accuracy to his desired haven. Captain Basil Hall tells us, in the book I have previously mentioned, that "he once sailed from San Blas, on the West Coast of Mexico; and, after a voyage of eight thousand miles, occupying eighty-nine days, he arrived off Rio de Janeiro, having in this interval passed through the Pacific Ocean, rounded Cape Horn, and crossed the South Atlantic, without making land, or seeing a single sail except an American whaler. When within a week's sail of Rio, he set seriously about determining, by lunar observations, the position of his ship, and then steered his course by those common principles of navigation which may be safely employed for short distances between one known station and another. Having arrived within what he considered, from his computations, fifteen or twenty miles of the coast, he hove to, at four o'clock in the morning, to await the break of day, and then bore up, proceeding cautiously on account of a thick fog. As this cleared away, the crew had the satisfaction of seeing the great Sugar-Loaf Rock, which stands on one side of the harbour's mouth, so nearly right a-head that they had not to alter their course above a point in order to hit the entrance of the port. This was the first land they had seen for nearly three months, after crossing so many seas, and being set backwards and forwards by innumerable currents and foul winds. The effect upon all on board was electric; and, giving way to their admiration, the sailors greeted the commander with a hearty cheer."

In a similar manner, we also sail by guidance from the heavenly

bodies, and we have for a long season no sight of land, and sometimes do not even see a passing sail; and yet, if we take our observations correctly, and follow the track which they point out, we shall have the great blessing, when we are about to finish our voyage, of seeing, not the great Sugar-Loaf Rock, but the Fair Haven of Glory right straight before us. We shall not have to alter our course even a single point; and, as we sail into the heavenly harbour, what songs of joy will we raise, not in glorification of our own skill, but in praise of the wondrous Captain and Pilot who has guided us over life's stormy sea, and enabled us to sail in safety even where we could not see our way!

Kepler makes a wise remark, when speaking about the mathematical system by which the course of a star could be predicted. After describing the result of his observations, and declaring his firm belief that the will of the Lord is the supreme power in the laws of nature, he says, "But if there be any man who is too dull to receive this science, I advise that, leaving the school of astronomy, he follow his own path, and desist from this wandering through the universe; and, lifting up his natural eyes, with which he alone can see, pour himself out in his own heart, in praise of God the Creator; being certain that he gives no less worship to God than the astronomer, to whom God has given to see more clearly with his inward eye, and who, for what he has himself discovered, both can and will glorify God."

That is, I think, a very beautiful illustration of what you may say to any poor illiterate man in your congregation, "Well, my friend, if you cannot comprehend this system of theology which I have explained to you, if these doctrines seem to you to be utterly incomprehensible, if you cannot follow me in my criticism upon the Greek text, if you cannot quite catch the poetical idea that I tried to give you just now, which is so charming to my own mind, nevertheless, if you know no more than that your Bible is true, that you yourself are a sinner, and that Jesus Christ is your Saviour, go on your way, and worship and adore, and think of God as you are able to do. Never mind about the astronomers, and the telescopes, and the stars, and the sun, and the moon; worship the Lord in your own fashion. Altogether apart from my theological knowledge, and my explanation of the doctrines revealed in the Scriptures, the Bible itself, and the precious truth you have received into your own soul, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will be quite enough to make you an acceptable worshipper of the Most High God."

I suppose you are all aware that among the old systems of astronomy was one which placed the earth in the centre, and made the sun, and the moon, and the stars revolve around it. "Its three fundamental principles were the immobility of the earth, its central position, and the daily revolution of all the heavenly bodies around it in circular orbits."

Now, in a similar fashion, there is a way of making a system of theology of which man is the centre, by which it is implied that Christ and his atoning sacrifice are only made for man's sake, and that the Holy Spirit is merely a great Worker on man's behalf, and that even the great and glorious Father is to be viewed simply as existing for the sake of making man happy. Well, that may be the system of theology adopted by some; but, brethren, we must not fall into that error, for, just as the earth is not the centre of the universe, so man is not the grandest of all beings. God has been pleased highly to exalt man; but we must remember how the psalmist speaks of him: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" In another place, David says, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away." Man cannot be the centre of the theological universe, he is altogether too insignificant a being to occupy such a position, and the scheme of redemption must exist for some other end than that of merely making man happy, or even of making him holy. The salvation of man must surely be first of all for the glory of God; and you have discovered the right form of Christian doctrine when you have found the system that has God in the centre, ruling and controlling according to the good pleasure of his will. Do not dwarf man so as to make it appear that God has no care for him; for if you do that, you slander God. Give to man the position that God has assigned to him; by doing so, you will have a system of theology in which all the truths of revelation and experience will move in glorious order and harmony around the great central orb, the Divine Sovereign Ruler of the universe, God over all, blessed for ever.

You may, however, any one of you, make another mistake by imagining yourself to be the centre of a system. That foolish notion is a good illustration, I think. There are some men whose fundamental principles are, first of all, their own immobility: what they

are, they always are to be, and they are right, and no one can stir them; secondly, their position is central, for them suns rise and set, and moons do wax and wane. For them, their wives exist; for them, their children are born; for them, everything is placed where it appears in God's universe; and they judge all things according to this one rule, "How will it benefit *me*?" That is the beginning and the end of their grand system, and they expect the daily revolution, if not of all the heavenly bodies, certainly of all the earthly bodies around them. The sun, the moon, and the eleven stars are to make obeisance to them. Well, brethren, that is an exploded theory so far as the earth is concerned, and there is no truth in such a notion with reference to ourselves. We may cherish the erroneous idea; but the general public will not, and the sooner the grace of God expels it from us, the better, so that we may take our proper position in a far higher system than any of which we can ever be the centre.

THE SUN, then, not the earth, is the centre of the solar system; which system, mark you, is probably only one little insignificant corner of the universe, although it includes such a vast space that if I could give you the actual figures you would not be able to form the slightest idea of what they really represented. Yet that tremendous system, compared with the whole of God's universe, may be only like a single grain of dust on the sea-shore, and there may be myriads upon myriads of systems, some of which are made up of innumerable systems as large as ours, and the great sun himself may only be a planet revolving round a greater sun, and this world only a little satellite to the sun, never yet observed by the astronomers who, it may be, live in that remoter sun still farther off. It is a marvellous universe that God has made; and however much of it we may have seen, we must never imagine that we have discovered more than a very small portion of the worlds upon worlds that God has created.

The earth, and all the planets, and all the solid matter of the universe, are controlled, as you know, by the force of attraction. We are kept in our place in the world, in going round the sun, by two forces, the one called centripetal, which draws us towards the sun, and the other called centrifugal, which is generally illustrated by the tendency of drops of water on a trundled mop to fly off at a tangent from the circle they are describing.

Now, I believe that, in like manner, there are two forces which are ever at work upon all of us, the one which draws us towards

God, and the other which drives us away from him, and we are thus kept in the circle of life; but, for my part, I shall be very glad when I can pass out of that circle, and get away from the influence of the centrifugal force. I believe that, the moment I do so,—as soon as ever the attraction which draws me away from God is gone,—I shall be with him in heaven; that I do not doubt. Directly one or other of the two forces which influence human life shall be exhausted, we shall have either to drift away into the far-off space, through the centrifugal force,—which God forbid!—or else we shall fly at once into the central orb, by the centripetal force, and the sooner that glorious end of life comes, the better will it be for us. With Augustine, I would say, “All things are drawn to their own centre. Be thou the Centre of my heart, O God, my Light, my only Love!”

The sun himself is an enormous body; he has been measured, but I think I will not burden you with the figures, since they will convey to you no adequate idea of his actual size. Suffice it to say that, if the earth and the moon were put inside the sun, there would be abundance of room for them to go on revolving in their orbits just as they are now doing; and there would be no fear of their knocking against that external crust of the sun which would represent to them the heavens.

It takes about eight minutes for light to reach us from the sun. We may judge of the pace at which that light comes when we reflect that a cannon-ball, rushing with the swiftest possible velocity, would take seven years to get there, and that a train, travelling at the rate of thirty miles an hour, and never stopping for refreshments, would require more than three hundred and fifty years before it would reach the terminus. You may thus form some slight idea of the distance that we are from the sun; and this, I think, furnishes us with a good illustration of faith. There is no man who can know, except by faith, that the sun exists. That he did exist eight minutes ago, I know, for here is a ray of light that has just come from him, and told me that; but I cannot be sure that he is existing at this moment. There are some of the fixed stars, that are at such a vast distance from the earth, that a ray of light from them takes hundreds of years to reach us; and, for aught we know, they may have been extinct long ago. Yet we still put them down in our chart of the heavens, and we can only keep them there by faith, for as, “through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God,” so it is only by faith that we can know that any of them now exist. When we come to examine the

matter closely, we find that our eyesight, and all our faculties and senses, are not sufficient to give us positive conviction with regard to these heavenly bodies; and therefore we still have to exercise faith; so is it to a high degree in spiritual affairs, we walk by faith, not by sight.

That the sun has spots upon his face, is a fact which everybody notices. Just so; and if you are suns, and are never so bright, yet if you have any spots upon you, you will find that people will be very quick to notice them, and to call attention to them. There is often much more talk about the sun's spots than there is about his luminous surface; and, after the same fashion, more will be said about any spots and imperfections that men may discover in our character than about any excellences that they may see in us. It was for some time asserted that there were no spots or specks whatever on the sun. Many astronomers, with the aid of the telescope, as well as without it, discovered these blemishes and patches on the face of the sun; but they were assured by men who ought to have known, namely, by the reverend fathers of the church, that it was impossible that there could be anything of the kind. The book I have previously quoted says:—"Upon Scheiner, a German Jesuit, reporting the evidence of his senses to his provincial superior, the latter positively refused to believe him. 'I have read,' said he, 'Aristotle's writings from end to end many times, and I can assure you that I have nowhere found in them anything similar to what you mention. Go, my son, and tranquillize yourself: be assured that what you take for spots in the sun are the faults of your glasses, or of your eyes.'" So, brethren, we know the force of bigotry, and how men will not see what is perfectly plain to us, and how, even when facts are brought before them, they cannot be made to believe in them, but will attribute them to anything but that which is the real truth. I am afraid that the Word of God itself has often been treated just in that way. Truths that are positively and plainly revealed there are stoutly denied, because they do not happen to fit in with the preconceived theories of unbelievers.

There have been a great many attempts to explain what the spots upon the sun really are. One theory is, that the solar orb is surrounded by a luminous atmosphere, and that the spots are open spaces in that atmosphere through which we see the solid surface of the sun. I cannot see any reason why that theory should not be the truth; and, if it be so, it seems to me to explain the first chapter of Genesis, where we are told that God created the light

on the first day, though he did not make the sun until the fourth day. Did he not make the light first, and then take the sun, which otherwise might have been a dark world, and put the light on it as a luminous atmosphere? The two things certainly might very well fit in with one another; and if these spots are really openings in the luminous atmosphere through which we see the dark surface of the sun, they are admirable illustrations of the spots that men see in us. We are clothed with holiness as with a garment of light; but every now and then there is a rift through which observers can see down into the dark body of natural depravity that still is in the very best of us.

It is a dangerous thing to look at the sun with unprotected eyes. Some have ventured to look at it with glasses that have no colouring in them, and they have been struck blind. There have been several instances of persons who have inadvertently neglected to use a proper kind of glass before turning the telescope to the sun, and so have been blinded. This is an illustration of our need of a Mediator, and of how necessary it is to see God through the medium of Christ Jesus our Lord; else might the excessive glory of the Deity utterly destroy the faculty of seeing God at all.

The effect of the sun upon the earth, I shall not dwell upon now, as that may rather concern another branch of science than astronomy. It will suffice to say that living plants will sometimes grow without the sun, as you may have seen them in a dark cellar; but how blanched they are when existing under such circumstances! What must have been the pleasure with which Humboldt entered into the great subterranean cave called the Cueva del Guacharo, in the district of Caraccas! It is a cavern inhabited by nocturnal, fruit-eating birds, and this was what the great naturalist saw:—"Seeds, carried in by the birds to their young, and dropped, had sprung up, producing tall, blanched, spectral stalks, covered with half-formed leaves; but it was impossible to recognize the species from the change in form, colour, and aspect, which the absence of light had occasioned. The native Indians gazed upon these traces of imperfect organization with mingled curiosity and fear, as if they were pale and disfigured phantoms banished from the face of the earth."

So, brethren, think what you and I would be without the light of God's countenance. Picture a church growing, as some churches do grow, without any light from heaven, a cavern full of strange birds and blanched vegetation. What a terrible place for anyone to visit! There is a cave of that sort at Rome, and there are

others in various parts of the earth; but woe unto those who go to live in such dismal dens!

What a wonderful effect the light of God's countenance has upon men who have the divine life in them, but who have been living in the dark! Travellers tell us that, in the vast forests of the Amazon and the Orinoco, you may sometimes see, on a grand scale, the influence of light in the colouring of the plants when the leaf-buds are developing. One says:—"Clouds and rain sometimes obscure the atmosphere for several days together, and during this time the buds expand themselves into leaves. But these leaves have a pallid hue till the sun appears, when, in a few hours of clear sky and splendid sunshine, their colour is changed to a vivid green. It has been related that, during twenty days of dark, dull weather, the sun not once making his appearance, the leaves were expanded to their full size, but were almost white. One forenoon, the sun began to shine in full brightness, when the colour of the forest changed so rapidly that its progress might be marked. By the middle of the afternoon, the whole, for many miles, presented the usual summer dress."

That is a beautiful illustration, it seems to me, that does not want any opening up; you can all make the application of it to the Lord Jesus for yourselves. As Dr. Watts sings,—

"In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun."

Then we begin to put on all sorts of beauty, as the leaves are painted by the rays of the sun. We owe every atom of colour that there is in any of our virtues, and every trace of flavour that there is in any of our fruits, to those bright sunbeams that come streaming down to us from the Sun of righteousness, who carries many other blessings besides healing beneath his wings.

The effect of the sun upon vegetation can be observed among the flowers in your own garden. Notice how they turn to him whenever they can; the sunflower, for instance, follows the sun's course as if he were himself the sun's son, and lovingly looked up to his father's face. He is very much like a sun in appearance, and I think that is because he is so fond of turning to the sun. The innumerable leaves of a clover field bend towards the sun; and all plants, more or less, pay deference to the sunlight to which they are so deeply indebted. Even the plants in the hothouse, you

can observe, do not grow in that direction you would expect them to do if they wanted warmth, that is, towards the stove-pipe, whence the heat comes, nor even to the spot where most air is admitted; but they will always, if they possibly can, send out their branches and their flowers towards the sun. That is how we ought to grow towards the Sun of righteousness; it is for our soul's health that we should turn our faces towards the Sun, as Daniel prayed with his windows open towards Jerusalem. Where Jesus is, there is our Sun; towards him let us constantly incline our whole being.

Not very long ago, I met with the following remarkable instance of the power of rays of light transmitted from the sun. Some divers were working at Plymouth Breakwater; they were down in the diving-bell, thirty feet below the surface of the water; but a convex glass, in the upper part of the bell, concentrated the sun's rays full upon them, and burnt their caps. As I read this story, I thought it was a capital illustration of the power there is in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our hearers are fully thirty feet under the waters of sin, if they are not even deeper down than that; but, by the grace of God, we will yet make them feel the blessed burning power of the truths we preach, even if we do not succeed in setting them all on fire with this powerful glass. Perhaps, when you were a boy, you had a burning-glass, and when you were out with a friend who did not know what you had in your pocket, while he was sitting very quietly by your side, you took out your glass, and held it for a few seconds over the back of his hand until he felt something rather hot just there. I like the man who, in preaching, concentrates the rays of the gospel on a sinner till he burns him. Do not scatter the beams of light; you can turn the glass so as to diffuse the rays instead of concentrating them; but the best way of preaching is to focus Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness, right on a sinner's heart. It is the best way in the world to get at him; and if he is thirty feet under the water, this burning-glass will enable you to reach him; only mind that you do not use your own candle instead of the Sun, for that will not answer the same purpose.

Sometimes the sun suffers eclipse, as you know. The moon intrudes between us and the sun, and then we cannot see the great orb of day. I suppose we have all seen one total eclipse, and we may see another. It is a very interesting sight; but it appears to me that people take a great deal more notice of the sun when he is eclipsed than they do when he is shining clearly. They do not stand looking at him, day after day, when he is pouring forth his

bright beams in unclouded glory ; but as soon as ever he is eclipsed, then they are out in their thousands, with their glasses, and every little boy in the street has a fragment of smoked glass through which he watches the eclipse of the sun.

Thus, brethren, I do not believe that our Lord Jesus Christ ever receives so much attention from men as when he is set forth as the suffering Saviour, evidently crucified among them. When the great eclipse passed over the Sun of Righteousness, then all eyes were fixed upon him, and well they might be. Do not fail to tell your hearers continually about that awful eclipse on Calvary ; but mind that you also tell them all the effects of that eclipse, and that there will be no repetition of that stupendous event.

“ Lo ! the sun’s eclipse is o’er ;
Lo ! he sets in blood no more.”

Speaking of eclipses, reminds me that there is, in the book I have mentioned, a striking description of one given by a correspondent who wrote to the astronomer Halley. He took his stand at Haradlow Hill, close to the east end of the avenue of Stonehenge, a very capital place for observation, and there he watched the eclipse. He says of it :—“ We were now enveloped in a total and palpable darkness, if I may be allowed the expression. It came on rapidly, but I watched so attentively that I could perceive its progress. It came upon us like a great black cloak thrown over us, or like a curtain drawn from that side. The horses we held by the bridle seemed deeply struck by it, and pressed closely to us with marks of extreme surprise. As well as I could perceive, the countenances of my friends wore a horrible aspect. It was not without an involuntary exclamation of wonder that I looked around me at this moment. It was the most awful sight I had ever beheld in my life.”

So, I suppose, it must be in the spiritual realm. When the Sun of this great world suffered eclipse, then were all men in darkness ; and when any dishonour comes upon the cross of Christ, or upon Christ himself, then is each Christian himself in darkness of a horrible kind. He cannot be in the light if his Lord and Master is in the shade.

One observer describes what he saw in Austria, where, it appears, all the people made the eclipse a time for keeping holiday, and turned out together on the plain with various modes of observing the wonderful sight. This writer says :—“ The phenomenon, in its magnificence, had triumphed over the petulance of youth, over

the levity which some persons assume as a sign of superiority, over the noisy indifference of which soldiers usually make profession. A profound stillness also reigned in the air : the birds had ceased to sing." The more curious thing is that, in London, after an eclipse, when the cocks found that the sun shone out again, they all began crowing as though they joyfully thought that the daylight had broken through the gloom of night.

Yet this wonderful phenomenon does not appear to have always attracted the attention of all persons who might have witnessed it. History says that, at one time, there was a battle being fought, I think, in Greece, and, during its progress, there came on a total eclipse of the sun ; but the warriors went on fighting all the same, indeed, they never noticed the extraordinary occurrence. That shows us how strong passions may make us forget surrounding circumstances, and it also teaches us how a man's engagements on earth may make him oblivious of all that is transpiring in the heavens. We read, just now, of how those horses, that were standing idly on Salisbury Plain, trembled during the eclipse ; but another writer tells us that the horses in Italy, that were busily occupied in drawing the carriages, do not appear to have taken the slightest notice of the phenomenon, but to have gone on their way the same as usual. Thus, the engagements of a worldly man are often so engrossing in their character that they prevent him from feeling those emotions which are felt by other men, whose minds are more at liberty to meditate upon them.

I met with a very pretty story, concerning an eclipse, which you will probably like to hear. A poor little girl, belonging to the commune of Sièyes, in the Lower Alps, was tending her flock on the mountain-side at six o'clock on a bright summer morning. The sun had risen, and was dissipating the vapours of the night, and everyone thought that there would be a glorious, unclouded day ; but gradually the light darkened until the sun had wholly disappeared, and a black orb took the place of the glowing disc, while the air became chill, and a mysterious gloom pervaded the whole region. The little child was so terrified by the circumstance, which was certainly unusual, that she began to weep, and cried out loudly for help. Her parents, and other friends, who came at her call, did not know anything about an eclipse, so they were also astounded and alarmed ; but they tried to comfort her as best they could. After a short time, the darkness passed away from the face of the sun, and it shone out as before, and then the little girl cried aloud, in the *patois* of the district, " O beautiful sun ! "

and well she might. When I read the story, I thought that, when my heart had suffered eclipse, and the presence of Christ had gone for a while, and then had come back again, how beautiful the Sun seemed to me, even more bright and fair than before the temporary darkness. Jesus seemed to shine on me with a brighter light than ever before, and my soul cried out in an ecstasy of delight, "O beautiful Sun of righteousness!"

That story must, I think, close our illustrations derived from the sun; for we want also to learn all we can from his planets, and if we intend to pay a visit to them all, we shall have to travel far, and to travel fast, too.

The nearest planet that revolves around the sun is **MERCURY**, which is about 37,000,000 miles from the great luminary. Mercury, therefore, receives a far greater allowance of light and heat from the sun than comes to us upon the earth. It is believed that, even at the poles of Mercury, water would always boil; that is to say, if the planet is constituted at all as this world is. None of us could possibly live there; but that is no reason why other people should not, for God could make some of his creatures to live in the fire just as well as he could make others to live out of it. I have no doubt that, if there are inhabitants there, they enjoy the heat. In a spiritual sense, at any rate, we know that men who live near to Jesus dwell in the divine flame of love.

Mercury is a comparatively small planet; its diameter is about 2,960 miles, while that of the earth is 7,975. Mercury rushes round the sun in eighty-eight days, travelling at the rate of nearly 110,000 miles in an hour, while the earth traverses only 65,000 miles in the same time. Fancy crossing the Atlantic in about two or three minutes! It is an instance of the wisdom of God that Mercury appears to be the densest of the planets. You see, that part of a machine in which there is the most rapid whirl, and the greatest wear and tear, ought to be made of the strongest material; and Mercury is made very strong in order to bear the enormous strain of its swift motion, and the great heat to which it is subjected.

This is an illustration of how God fits every man for his place; if he means me to be Mercury,—the messenger of the gods, as the ancients called him,—and to travel swiftly, he will give me a strength proportioned to my day. In the formation of every planet, adapting it to its peculiar position, there is a wonderful proof of the power and forethought of God; and in a similar

manner does he fit human beings for the sphere they are each called to occupy.

I like to see in Mercury a picture of the child of God who is full of grace. Mercury is always near the sun; indeed, so near that it is itself very seldom seen. I think Copernicus said that he never did see it, although he had long watched for it with great care, and he deeply regretted that he had to die without having ever seen this planet. Others have observed it, and it has been quite a treat for them to be able to watch its revolutions. Mercury is usually lost in the rays of the sun; and that is where you and I ought to be, so close to Christ, the Sun of righteousness, in our life and in our preaching, that the people who are trying to observe our movements can scarcely see us at all. Paul's motto must be ours: "Not I, but Christ."

Mercury, also, in consequence of being so near the sun, is apparently the least understood of any of the planets. It has, perhaps, given more trouble to the astronomers than any other member of the heavenly family; they have paid great attention to it, and tried to find out all about it; but they have had a very difficult task, for it is generally lost in the solar glory, and never seen in a dark portion of the heavens. So, I believe, brethren, that the nearer we live to Christ, the greater mystery shall we be to all mankind. The more we are lost in his brightness, the less will they be able to understand us. If we were always what we should be, men would see in us an illustration of the text, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Like Mercury, we ought also to be so active in our appointed orbit that we should not give observers time to watch us in any one position; and next, we should be so absorbed in the glory of Christ's presence, that they would not be able to perceive us.

When Mercury is seen from the earth, it is never visible in its brightness, for its face is always turned towards the sun. I am afraid that, whenever any of us are seen very much, we usually appear only as black spots; when the preacher is very prominent in a sermon, there is always a darkness. I like gospel preaching to be all Christ, the Sun of righteousness, and no black spot at all; nothing of ourselves, but all of the Lord Jesus. If there are any inhabitants of Mercury, the sun must appear to them four or five times as large as he does to us; the brightness would be insufferable to our eyes. It would be a very splendid sight if one could gaze upon it; and thus, the nearer you get to Christ, the more you see of him, and the more he grows in your esteem.

The next planet to Mercury is VENUS; it is about 66,000,000 miles from the sun, and is a little smaller than the earth, its diameter being 7,510 miles, compared with our 7,975. Venus goes round the sun in 225 days, travelling at the rate of 80,000 miles an hour. When the Copernican system of astronomy was fairly launched upon the world, one of the objections to it was stated thus:—"It is clear that Venus does not go round the sun, because, if it does, it must present the same aspect as the moon, namely, it must sometimes be a crescent, at other times a half-moon, or it must assume the form known as *gibbous*, and sometimes it must appear as a complete circle. But," said the objector, pointing to Venus, "she is always the same size; look at her, she is not at all like the moon." This was a difficulty that some of the earlier astronomers could not explain; but when Galileo was able to turn his newly-made telescope to the planet, what did he discover? Why, that Venus does pass through similar phases to those of the moon! We cannot always see the whole of it enlightened, yet I suppose it is true that the light of Venus always appears about the same to us. You will perceive in a moment why that is; when the planet's face is turned toward us, it is at the greatest distance from the earth; consequently, the light that reaches us is no more than when it is closer, but has its face at least partly turned away from us. To my mind, the two facts are perfectly reconcilable; and so is it, I believe, with some of the doctrines of grace that perplex certain people. They say, "How do you make these two things agree?" I reply, "I do not know that I am bound to prove how they agree. If God had told me, I would tell you; but as he has not done so, I must leave the matter where the Bible leaves it." I may not have discovered the explanation of any apparent difference between the two truths, and yet, for all that, the two things may be perfectly consistent with one another.

Venus is both the morning star and "the star of the evening, beautiful star." It has been called Lucifer, and Phosphorus, the light-bringer, and also Hesperus, the vesper star. You perhaps remember how Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, refers to this double character and office of Venus:—

"Fairest of stars! last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn;
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circle: praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime."

Our Lord Jesus Christ calls himself, "the bright and morning star." Whenever he comes into the soul, he is the sure harbinger of that everlasting light which shall go no more down for ever. Now that Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, has gone from the gaze of man, you and I must be like evening stars, keeping as close as we can to the great central Sun, and letting the world know what Jesus was like by our resemblance to him. Did he not say to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world"?

The next little planet that goes round the sun is **THE EARTH**. Its distance from the sun varies from about ninety-two to ninety-five millions of miles. Do not be discouraged, gentlemen, in your hopes of reaching the sun, because you are nothing like so far away as the inhabitants of Saturn; if there are any residents there, they are about ten times as far from the sun as we are. Still, I do not suppose you will ever take a seat in Sol's fiery chariot; at least, not in your present embodied state; it is far too warm a place for you to be at home there. The earth is somewhat larger than Venus, and it takes much longer to go round the sun, it is twelve months on its journey, or, speaking exactly, 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes, and 10 seconds. This world is a slow-going concern; and I am afraid it is less to the glory of God than any other world that he has made. I have not seen it from a distance; but I should suspect that it never shines anything like so brightly as Venus; for, through sin, a cloud of darkness has enveloped it. I suppose that, in the millennial days, the curtain will be drawn back, and a light will be thrown upon the earth, and that it will then shine to the glory of God like its sister stars that have never lost their pristine brightness. I think there have been some curtains drawn up already; every sermon, full of Christ, that we preach, rolls away some of the mists and fogs from the surface of the planet; at any rate, morally and spiritually, if not naturally.

Still, brethren, though the earth travels slowly, when compared with Mercury and Venus, yet, as Galileo said, it does move, and at a pretty good rate, too. I dare say, if you were to walk for twenty minutes, and you knew nothing about the speed at which the earth is travelling, you would be surprised if I assured you that you had in that short space of time gone more than 20,000 miles; but it would be a fact. This book, which has already given us much useful information, says:—"It is a truly astonishing thought that, 'awake, asleep, at home, abroad,' we are constantly carried round with the terrestrial mass, at the rate of

eleven miles a minute, and are, at the same time, travelling with it in space with a velocity of sixty-six thousand miles an hour. Thus, during the twenty minutes consumed in walking a mile from our thresholds, we are silently conveyed more than twenty thousand miles from one portion of space to another; and, during a night of eight hours' rest, or tossing to and fro, we are unconsciously translated through an extent equal to twice the distance of the lunar world."

We do not take any notice of this movement, and so it is that little things, which are near and tangible, often seem more notable than great things which are more remote. This world impresses many men with far greater force than the world to come has ever done, because they look only upon the things that are seen and temporal. "But," perhaps you say, "we do not feel ourselves moving." No, but you are moving, although you are not conscious of it. So, I think that, sometimes, when a believer in Christ does not feel himself advancing in divine things, he need not fret on that account; I am not certain that those who imagine themselves to be growing spiritually are really doing so. Perhaps they are only growing a cancer somewhere; and its deadly fibres make them fancy there is a growth within them. Alas! so there is; but it is a growth unto destruction.

When a man thinks that he is a full-grown Christian, he reminds me of a poor boy whom I used to see. He had such a splendid head for his body that he had often to lay it on a pillow, for it was too weighty for his shoulders to carry, and his mother told me that, when he tried to stand up, he often tumbled down, overbalanced by his heavy head. There are some people who appear to grow very fast, but they have water on the brain, and are out of due proportion; but he who truly grows in grace does not say, "Dear me! I can feel that I am growing; bless the Lord! Let's sing a hymn, 'I'm a growing! I'm a growing!'" I have sometimes felt that I was growing smaller, brethren; I think that is very possible, and a good thing, too. If we are very great in our own estimation, it is because we have a number of cancers, or foul gatherings, that need to be lanced, so as to let out the bad matter that causes us to boast of our bigness.

It is a good thing that we do not feel ourselves moving, for, as I before reminded you, we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet I know that we are moving, and I am persuaded that I shall return, as nearly as the earth's revolution permits, to this exact spot this day twelvemonth. If they are looking down at me from Saturn,

they will spy me out somewhere near this same place, unless the Lord should come in the meantime, or he should call me up to be with him.

If we did feel the world move, it would probably be because there was some obstruction in the heavenly road; but we go on so softly, and gently, and quietly, that we do not perceive it. I believe that growth in grace is very much after the same fashion. A babe grows, and yet does not know that he grows; the seed unconsciously grows in the earth, and so we are developing in the divine life until we come to the fulness of the stature of men in Christ Jesus.

Waiting upon the earth is **THE MOON**. In addition to her duty as one of the planets revolving round the sun, she has the task of attending upon the earth, doing much useful service for it, and at night lighting it with her great reflector-lamp, according to the allowance of oil she has available for shedding her beams upon us. The moon also operates upon the earth by her powers of attraction; and as the water is the more mobile part of our planet, the moon draws it towards herself, so making the tides; and those tides help to keep the whole world in healthful motion; they are a sort of life-blood to it.

The moon undergoes eclipse, sometimes very frequently, and a great deal more often than the sun; and this phenomenon has occasioned much terror. Among some tribes, an eclipse of the moon is an occasion for the greatest possible grief. Sir R. Schomberg thus describes a total lunar eclipse in San Domingo:—"I stood alone upon the flat roof of the house which I inhabited, watching the progress of the eclipse. I pictured in imagination the lively and extraordinary scene which I once witnessed in the interior of Guiana, among the untutored and superstitious Indians, how they rushed out of their huts when the first news of the eclipse came, gibbered in their tongue, and, with violent gesticulations, threw up their clenched fists towards the moon. When, as on this occasion, the disc was perfectly eclipsed, they broke out in moanings, and sullenly squatted upon the ground, hiding their faces between their hands. The females remained, during this strange scene, within their huts. When, shining like a sparkling diamond, the first portion of the moon, that had disencumbered itself from the shadow, became visible, all eyes were turned towards it. They spoke to each other with subdued voices; but their observations became louder and louder, and they quitted their stooping position as the light increased. When the bright disc

announced that the monster which wanted to stifle the Queen of Night had been overcome, the great joy of the Indians was expressed in that peculiar whoop, which, in the stillness of the night, may be heard for a great distance."

Want of faith causes the most extraordinary fear, and produces the most ridiculous action. A man who believes that the moon, though temporarily hidden, will shine forth again, looks upon an eclipse as a curious phenomenon worthy of his attention, and full of interest; but the man who really fears that God is blowing out the light of the moon, and that he shall never see its bright rays any more, feels in a state of terrible distress. Perhaps he will act as the Hindoos and some of the Africans do during an eclipse; they beat old drums, and blow bullocks' horns, and make all manner of frightful noises, to cause the dragon who is supposed to have swallowed the moon to vomit it up again. That is their theory of an eclipse, and they act accordingly; but once know the truth, and know especially the glorious truth that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose," and we shall not be afraid of any dragon swallowing the moon, nor of anything else that the fears of men have made them imagine. If we are ignorant of the truth, every event that occurs, which may be readily enough accounted for from God's point of view, may cause the utmost terror, and drive us, perhaps, into the wildest follies.

The next planet to the earth is MARS; fiery Mars, generally shining with a ruddy light. It used to be thought that the colour of Mars' "blood-red shield" was caused by the absorption of the solar rays; but this idea has been refuted, and it is now believed to be due to the colour of its soil. According to the former idea, an angry man, who is like Mars, the god of war, must be one who has absorbed all other colours for his own use, and only shows the red rays to others; while the more modern notion, that the soil of the planet gives it its distinctive colour, teaches us that, where there is a fiery nature, there will be a warlike exhibition of it unless it is restrained by grace. Mars is about 140,000,000 miles from the sun, it is much smaller than our earth, its equatorial diameter being 4,363 miles. Travelling at the rate of 53,600 miles an hour, it takes 687 days to complete its revolution round the sun.

Between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, there is a wide zone, in which, for many centuries, no planets were visible; but the

astronomers said within themselves, "There must surely be something or other between Mars and Jupiter." They could not find any great planets; but as telescopes became larger, and more powerful, they observed that there was a great number of **ASTEROIDS** or **PLANETOIDS**, as some term them. I do not know how many there are, for they are like some of our brethren's families, they are daily increasing. Some hundreds of them have already been discovered; and by the aid of telescopic photography, we may expect to hear of the finding of many more. The first asteroid was identified on the first day of the present century, and was named Ceres. Many of them have been called by female mythological names, I suppose because they are the smaller planets, and it is considered gallant to give them ladies' names. They appear to vary from about 20 to 200 miles in diameter; and many have thought that they are the fragments of some planet that once revolved between Mars and Jupiter, but that has been blown up, and gone to pieces in a general wreck.

Those meteoric stones, which sometimes fall to the earth, but which much more frequently, at certain seasons of the year, are seen shooting across the midnight sky, may also be fragments of the aforesaid world which has perished. At all events, since the fathers fell asleep, all things have not continued as they were; there have been changes in the starry world to let men know that other changes will yet come. These blocks of meteoric matter are flying through space, and when they get within the range of our atmosphere, there is an opposing medium, they have to drive through it at an enormous rapidity, and so they become burning hot, and thus they become visible. And, in like manner, I believe that there are plenty of good men in the world who are invisible till they get to be opposed, and being opposed, and having the love of God driving them on with tremendous momentum, they become red-hot with holy fervour, they overcome all opposition, and then they become visible to the eye of mankind. For my part, I rather like to pass through an opposing medium. I think that we all want to travel in that kind of atmosphere just to give us the sacred friction that will fully develop the powers with which we have been entrusted. If God has given us force, it is not at all a bad thing for us to be put where there is opposition, because we shall not be stopped by it, but shall by that very process be made to shine all the brighter as lights in the world.

Beyond the space which is occupied by the asteroids, is the

magnificent planet, JUPITER, the brightest star which we see, except Venus; and yet he is very, very far away. His mean distance from the sun is about 475,000,000 miles; that is, more than five times as far off as we are. Even here, we are so far away that we do not often see the sun; but Jupiter is five times as far from the sun, and it takes him 4,333 days, or nearly twelve of our years, to go round the great luminary, travelling at a speed of 27,180 miles an hour. The reason why Jupiter is so bright is, partly, because of his great size, for he is nearly 90,000 miles in diameter, while the earth is less than 8,000, and it may be partly because he is better constituted for reflecting, or else, at that distance, his magnitude would not avail him. And brethren, if you and I are put in difficult positions, where we seem to be unable to shine to the glory of God, we must ask the Lord specially to constitute us so that we can better reflect his brightness, and so produce as good an effect as our brethren who are placed in more favourable positions.

Jupiter is attended by four moons.* These satellites were discovered soon after the invention of the telescope; yet there were several persons who would not believe in their existence, and one of our excellent friends, the Jesuits, of course, was strongest in his determination that he never would, by any process, be convinced of that which others knew to be a fact. He was asked to look through a telescope in order to see that it was really so; but he declined because he said that, perhaps, if he did so, he would be obliged to believe it; and as he had no desire to do so, he refused to look. Are there not some who act thus towards the truths of revelation? Some time after, the Jesuit fell under the anger of good Kepler, and being convinced that he was in the wrong, he went to the astronomer, and begged his pardon. Kepler told him that he would forgive him, but he would have to inflict a penance upon him. "What will it be?" he enquired. "Why," said Kepler, "you must look through that telescope." That was the direst punishment the Jesuit could possibly receive; for, when he looked through the instrument, he was obliged to say that he did see what he had formerly denied, and he was obliged to express his conviction of the truth of the astronomer's teaching. So, sometimes, to make a man see the truth, is a very severe penalty

* "In September, 1892, a fifth satellite was discovered through the great telescope at the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton, California."—*The Voices of the Stars*. By J. E. Walker, M.A. Elliot Stock.

to him. If he does not want to see it, it is a good thing to compel him to look at it. There are a great many brethren, who are not Jesuits, and who yet are not anxious to know the whole truth; but I hope that you and I, brethren, will always desire to learn all that the Lord has revealed in his Word.

This was the argument of Sizzi, an astronomer of some note, who tried to prove that Jupiter's moons could not exist. I wonder whether you can see the flaw in it:—"There are seven windows given to animals in the domicile of the head, through which the air is admitted to the tabernacle of the body, to enlighten, to warm, and to nourish it; which windows are the principal parts of the microcosm, or little world, two nostrils, two eyes, two ears, and one mouth. So, in the heavens, as in a microcosm, or great world, there are two favourable stars, Jupiter and Venus; two unpropitious, Mars and Saturn; two luminaries, the sun and the moon; and Mercury alone undecided and indifferent, from which, and from many other phenomena of nature, such as the seven metals, etc., which it were tedious to enumerate, we gather that the number of planets is necessarily seven. Moreover, the satellites are invisible to the naked eye, and therefore can exercise no influence over the earth, and therefore would be useless, and therefore do not exist. Besides, as well the Jews and other ancient nations, as modern Europeans, have adopted the division of the week into seven days, and have named them from the seven planets. Now, if we increase the number of the planets, this whole system falls to the ground."

I think, brethren, that I have heard the same kind of argument advanced many times with reference to spiritual matters; that is, an argument from theory against fact; but facts will always overturn theories all the world over, only that, sometimes, it takes a good while before the facts can be absolutely proved.

It is a singular thing, and another instance of the power and wisdom of God, that though the satellites of Jupiter are constantly being eclipsed, as is natural enough from their rapid revolutions around him, yet they are never all eclipsed at one time. One moon may be eclipsed, and perhaps another, or even three out of the four; but there is always one left shining; and, in like manner, God never takes away all the comfort of his people at once, there is always some ray of light to cheer them.

There is a great deal more to be learned from Jupiter; but having introduced you to him, I will leave you to examine him for yourselves, and to get all you can out of him.

Far, far beyond Jupiter is SATURN. That respectable planet has been very much slandered, but I am happy to inform you that he does not deserve such treatment. He is nearly 900,000,000 miles from the sun. I wonder whether any brother here, with a large mind, has any idea of what a million is; I do not suppose that he has, and I am sure that I have not. It takes a vast deal of thinking to comprehend what a million means; but to realize what is meant by a million miles, is altogether beyond one's mental grasp. A million pins would be something enormous; but a million miles! And here we are talking of nine hundred millions of miles; well, I give up all thought of understanding what that is so long as I am in this finite state. Why, when you speak of nine hundred millions, you might as well say nine hundred billions at once; for the one term is almost as incomprehensible as the other; and yet, please to recollect that this vast space is to our great God only a mere hand's-breadth compared with the immeasurable universe that he has created.

I said that Saturn had been greatly slandered, and so he has. You know that we have, in our English language, the word "saturnine", as a very uncomplimentary description of certain individuals. When a man is praised for being very hearty and genial, he is said to be jovial, in allusion to Jove, or Jupiter, the brightly-shining planet; but a person of an opposite temperament is called saturnine, because it is supposed that Saturn is a dull planet, dreadfully dreary, and that his influences are malignant and baneful. If you have read some of the astrological books which I have had the pleasure of studying, you have there been told that, if you had been born under the influence of Saturn, you might almost as well have been born under the influence of Satan, for it will come to about the same thing in the end. He is supposed to be a very slow sort of individual, his symbol is the hieroglyphic of lead; but he is really a very light and buoyant personage. His diameter is about nine times as great as that of the earth, and while in volume he is equal to 746 worlds as large as ours, his weight is only equal to 92 such globes. The densities of the planets appear to diminish according to their distance from the sun, not in regular proportion, but still very largely so; and there seems to be no reason why those which are most remote, and travel slowly, should be made so dense as those which are nearer the central orb, and revolve more quickly around him.

This useful volume, from which I have already given you several extracts, says:—"Instead, therefore, of sinking like lead in

the mighty waters, he would float upon the liquid, if an ocean could be found sufficiently capacious to receive him. John Goad, the well-known astro-meteorologist, declared the planet not to be such a 'plumbeous blue-nosed fellow' as all antiquity had believed, and the world still supposed. But it was the work of others to prove it. For six thousand years or so, Saturn concealed his personal features, interesting family, and strange appurtenances,—the magnificent out-buildings of his house,—from the knowledge of mankind. But he was caught at last by a little tube, pointed at him from a slope of the Apennines, the holder of which, in invading his privacy, cared not to ask leave, and deemed it no intrusion." When that "little tube" was turned upon him, he was found to be a most beautiful planet, one of the most varied and most marvellous of all the planetary worlds.

Take that as an illustration of the falseness of slander, and of how some persons are very much bemired and bespattered because people do not know them. This planet, which was so despised, turned out to be a very beautiful object indeed; and, instead of being very dull, and what the word saturnine usually means, he is bright and glorious. Saturn also has no less than eight satellites to attend him; and, in addition, he has three magnificent rings, of which Tennyson has sung,—

"Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast shade
Sleeps on his luminous rings."

Saturn has only about a hundredth part of the light from the sun as compared with what we receive; and yet, I suppose, the atmosphere might be so arranged that he might have as much solar light as we have; but even if the atmosphere is of the same kind as ours, Saturn would still have as much light as we have in an ordinary London fog. I am speaking, of course, of the light from the sun; but then we cannot tell what illuminating power the Lord may have put in the planet himself; and beside that, he has his eight moons, and his three shining rings, which have a brilliance that we cannot either imagine or describe. What must it be to see a marvellous arch of light rising to a height of 37,570 miles above the planet, and having the enormous span of 170,000 miles! If you were at the equator of Saturn, you would only see the rings as a narrow band of light; but if you could journey towards the poles, you would see above you a tremendous arch, blazing with light, like some of the vast reflectors that you see hung up in large buildings where they cannot get sufficient sun-

light. The reflector helps to gather up the rays of light, and throw them where they are needed; and I have no doubt that these rings act like reflectors to Saturn. It must be a wonderful world to live in if there are inhabitants there; they get compensations which fully make up for their disadvantages in being so far away from the sun. So is it in the spiritual world, what the Lord withholds in one direction he makes up in another; and those who are far removed from the means of grace, and Christian privileges, have an inward light and joy, which others, with greater apparent advantages, might almost envy.

Journeying again in the heavens, far, far beyond Saturn, we come to URANUS, or HERSCHEL, as it is sometimes called, after the astronomer who discovered it in 1781. The mean distance of Uranus from the sun is believed to be about 1,754,000,000 miles; I give you the figures, but neither you nor I can have the slightest conception of the distance they represent. To an observer standing on Uranus, the sun would probably appear only as a far-away speck of light; yet the planet revolves around the sun at about 15,000 miles an hour, and occupies about eighty-four of our years in completing one journey. Uranus is said to be equal in volume to seventy-three or seventy-four earths, and to be attended by four moons. I do not know much about Uranus, therefore I do not intend to say much about him.

That may serve as an illustration of the lesson that a man had better say as little as possible concerning anything of which he knows only a little; and that is a lesson which many people need to learn. For instance, there are probably more works on the Book of Revelation than upon any other part of the Scriptures, and, with the exception of just a few, they are not worth the paper on which they are printed. Then, next to the Book of Revelation, in this respect, is the Book of Daniel; and because it is so difficult to explain, many men have written upon it, but as a rule the result of their writing has been that they have only confuted and contradicted one another. Let us, brethren, preach what we know; and say nothing of that of which we are ignorant.

We have gone a long way, in imagination, in travelling to the planet Uranus; but we have not yet completed our afternoon's journey. It was observed by certain astronomers that the orbit of Uranus sometimes deviated from the course they had marked in their chart of the heavens; and this convinced them that there

was another planetary body, not then discovered, which was exerting an unseen but powerful influence upon Uranus.

This fact, that these huge worlds, with so many millions of miles of space between them, do retard or accelerate each other's movements, is to me a beautiful illustration of the influence that you and I have upon our fellow-men. Whether consciously or unconsciously, we either impede a man's progress in the path that leads to God, or else we quicken his march along the heavenward way. "None of us liveth to himself."

The astronomers came to the conclusion that there must be another planet, previously unknown to them, that was disturbing the motion of Uranus. Unknown to one another, an Englishman, Mr. Adams, of Cambridge, and a Frenchman, M. Leverrier, set to work to find out the position in which they expected the heavenly body to be discovered, and their calculations brought them to almost identical results. When the telescopes were pointed to that part of the heavens where the mathematical astronomers believed the planet would be found, it was at once discovered, shining with a pale and yellow light, and we now know it by the name of NEPTUNE.

The volume before me thus speaks of the two methods of finding a planet, the one worker using the most powerful telescope, and the other making mathematical calculations:—"To detect a planet by the eye, or to track it to its place by the mind, are acts as incommensurable as those of muscular and intellectual power. Recumbent on his easy chair, the practical astronomer has but to look through the cleft in his revolving cupola, in order to trace the pilgrim star in its course; or, by the application of magnifying power, to expand its tiny disc, and thus transfer it from among its sidereal companions to the planetary domains. The physical astronomer, on the contrary, has no such auxiliaries: he calculates at noon, when the stars disappear under a meridian sun; he computes at midnight, when clouds and darkness shroud the heavens; and from within that cerebral dome which has no opening heavenwards, and no instrument but the eye of reason, he sees in the disturbing agencies of an unseen planet, upon a planet by him equally unseen, the existence of the disturbing agent, and from the nature and amount of its action he computes its magnitude, and indicates its place."

What a grand thing is reason! Far above the mere senses, and then faith is high above reason; only, in the case of the mathematical astronomer of whom we are thinking, reason was a kind of

faith. He argued, "God's laws are so-and-so and so-and-so. This planet Uranus is being disturbed, some other planet must have disturbed it, so I will search and find out where he is;" and when his intricate calculations were completed, he put his finger on Neptune as readily as a detective lays his hand on a burglar, and a great deal sooner; indeed, it seems to me that it is often easier to find a star than to catch a thief.

Neptune had long been shining before he was discovered and named; and you and I, brethren, may remain unknown for years, and possibly the world may never discover us; but I trust that our influence, like that of Neptune, will be felt and recognized, whether we are seen of men, or only shine in solitary splendour to the glory of God.

Well, we have travelled in thought as far as Neptune, which is about 2,748,000,000 miles from the sun; and, standing there, we look over into space, and there are myriads, and myriads, and myriads of miles in which there appear to be no more planets belonging to the solar system. There may be others that have not been discovered yet; but, as far as we know, beyond Neptune there is a great gulf fixed.

There are, however, what I may call "leapers" in the system, which, without the use of a pole, are able to cross this gulf; they are **THE COMETS**. These comets are, as a rule, so thin,—a mere filmy mass of vapour,—that when they come flashing into our system, and rushing out again, as they do, they never disturb the motion of a planet. And there are some terrestrial comets about, that I know, that go to various towns, and blaze away for a time; but they have no power to disturb the planets revolving there in their regular course. The power of a man does not consist in rushing to and fro, like a comet, but in steadily shining year after year like a fixed star. The astronomer Halley says, "If you were to condense a comet down to the thickness of the ordinary atmosphere, it would not fill a square inch of space." So thin is a comet, that you might look through five thousand miles of it, and see just as easily as if it were not there. It is well to be transparent, brethren; but I hope you will be more substantial than most of the comets of which we have heard.

Comets come with great regularity, though they seem to be very irregular. Halley prophesied that the comet of 1682, of which little had been previously known, would return at regular intervals of about seventy-five years. He knew that he would not

live to see its reappearance; but he expressed the hope that when it did return, his prophecy might be remembered. Various astronomers were looking out for it, and they hoped it might arrive at the time foretold, because, otherwise, ignorant people would not believe in astronomy. But the comet came back all right: so their minds were set at rest, and Halley's prediction was verified.

Among the stories concerning comet-watching, there is one that contains an illustration and a lesson also. "Messier, who had acquired the name of 'the comet-hunter', from the number he discovered, was particularly anxious upon the occasion. Of great simplicity of character, his zeal after comets was often displayed in the oddest manner. While attending the death-bed of his wife, and necessarily absent from his observatory, the discovery of one was snatched from him by Montaigne de Limoges. This was a grievous blow. A visitor began to offer him consolation on account of his recent bereavement, when Messier, thinking only of the comet, answered, 'I had discovered twelve; alas, to be robbed of the thirteenth by that Montaigne!' But instantly recollecting himself, he exclaimed, 'Ah! cette pauvre femme!' and went on deploring wife and comet together." He evidently lived so much in the heavens that he forgot his wife; and if science can sometimes carry a man away from all the trials of this mortal life, surely our heavenly life ought to lift us up above all the distractions and cares that afflict us.

The return of a comet is frequently announced with great certainty. This paragraph appeared in a newspaper:—"On the whole, it may be considered as tolerably certain that the comet will become visible in every part of Europe about the latter end of August, or the beginning of September next. It will most probably be distinguishable by the naked eye, like a star of the first magnitude, but with a duller light than that of a planet, and surrounded with a pale nebulosity, which will slightly impair its splendour. On the night of the 7th of October, the comet will approach the well-known constellation of the Great Bear; and between that and the 11th, it will pass directly through the seven conspicuous stars of that constellation. Towards the close of November, the comet will plunge among the rays of the sun, and disappear, and not issue from them, on the other side, until the end of December. This prospectus of the movements of a body, invisible at the time, millions of miles away, is nearly as definite as the early advertisements of coaching between London and Edinburgh. Let us now place the observations of the eye alongside

the anticipations of science, and we shall find that science has proved almost absolutely correct."

Just think of the calculations, gentlemen, that were necessary, for, though a comet does not interfere with the course of a planet, a planet interferes very considerably with the course of a comet; so that, in their calculations, the astronomers had to recollect the track in which the comet would have to travel. Thinking of him as a way-worn traveller, we remember that he will have to go by Neptune's bright abode, and Neptune will be sure to give him a cup of tea; then he will journey on as far as Uranus, and put up for the night there; in the morning, he will pay an early visit to Saturn, and he will stay there for breakfast; he will dine with Jupiter; by and by he will reach Mars, and there will be sure to be a row there; and he will be glad when he gets to Venus, and, of course, he will be detained by her charms. You will, therefore, very readily see, gentlemen, that the calculations as to the return of a comet are extremely difficult, and yet the astronomers do estimate the time to a nicety. This science is a very marvellous one, not only for what it reveals, but for the talent which it brings out, and the lessons it continually teaches us about the wonderful works of our great Father.

We have done with the solar system, and even with those interlopers which come to us every now and then from far remote systems, for a comet, I suppose, is only seen for a month, or a week, and then sometimes does not reappear for hundreds of years. Where have they gone all that while? Well, they have gone somewhere, and they are serving the purpose of the God who made them, I dare say; but, for my own part, I would not like to be a comet in God's system. I would like to have my fixed place, and keep on shining for the Lord there. I have lived in London for a good many years, and I have seen many comets come and go during that time. Oh, the great lights I have seen rush by! They have gone off into some unknown sphere, as comets usually do. I have generally noticed that, when men are going to do so much more than everybody else, and they are so amazingly pompous over it, their history is usually pretty accurately described by that simple simile of going up like a rocket, and coming down like a stick.

I do not know whether you can, in imagination, lean over the battlements of this little solar system, and see what there is beyond it. Do not narrow your minds, gentlemen, to a few hundred

millions of miles ! If you look out for a long way indeed, you will begin to see a star. I should only be uttering meaningless words if I told you its distance from us ; yet there are others, of those that we are able to see, that are almost immeasurably farther away. They have taken a deal of trouble to send us a ray of light such a vast distance, to inform us that they are getting on very well, and that, though they are at such a distance from us, they still enjoy themselves as best they can in our absence.

These stars, as the common people look at them, seem to be scattered about in the heavens, as we say, "anyhow." I always admire that charming variety ; and I am thankful to God that he has not set the stars in straight lines, like rows of street-lamps. Only think, brethren, how it would be if we looked up at night, and saw the stars all arranged in rows, like pins on a paper ! Bless the Lord, it is not so ! He just took a handful of bright worlds, and scattered them about the sky, and they dropped into most beautiful positions, so that people say, "There is the great Bear ;" and, "That is Charles's Wain," and every countryman knows the Reaping-hook. Have you not seen it, brethren ? Others say, "That is the Virgin, and that is the Ram, and that is the Bull," and so on.

I think that naming of the various constellations is very like a good deal of mystical preaching that there is nowadays. The preachers say, "That is so-and-so, and that is so-and-so." Well, perhaps it is so ; but I do not see it. You may imagine anything you like in the constellations of the heavens. I have pictured a fortress in the fire, and watched it being built up, and seen little soldiers come and pull it all down. You can see anything in the fire, and in the sky, and in the Bible, if you like to look for it in that way ; you do not see it in reality, it is only a freak of your imagination. There are no bulls and bears in the heavens. There may be a virgin, but she is not to be worshipped as the Romanists teach. I hope you all know the pole-star ; you ought also to know the pointers ; they point to the pole-star, and that is just what we ought to do, to direct the poor slaves of sin and Satan to the true Star of liberty, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Then there are the Pleiades ; almost anybody can tell you where they are. They are a cluster of apparently little stars, but they are intensely bright. They teach me that, if I am a very little man, I must try to be very bright ; if I cannot be like Aldebaran, or some of the brightest gems of the sky, I must be as bright as I can in my own particular sphere, and be as useful there as if I

were a star of the first magnitude. Then, on the other side of the globe, they look up to the Southern Cross. I dare say one of our brethren from Australia will give you a private lecture upon that constellation. It is very beautiful to think of the Cross being the guide of the mariner; it is the best guide anyone can have, either this side of the tropics, or the other.

Beside the stars, there are vast luminous bodies which are called NEBULÆ. In some parts of the heavens, there are enormous masses of light-matter; they were supposed by some to be the material out of which worlds were made. These were the lumps of mortar, out of which, according to the old atheistic theory, worlds grew by some singular process of evolution; but when Herschel turned his telescope upon them, he very soon put the nose of that theory out of joint, for he discovered that these nebulae were simply enormous masses of stars, such myriads upon myriads of miles away, that, to our sight, they looked just like a little dust of light.

There are many wonderful things to be learned about the stars, to which I hope you will give your earnest attention as you have the opportunity. Among the rest is this fact, that some stars have ceased to be visible to us. Tycho Brahé said that, on one occasion he found a number of villagers looking up at the sky; and, on asking them why they were gazing at the heavens, they told him that a new star had suddenly appeared. It shone brightly for a few months, and then vanished. Many times, a starry world has seemed to turn red, as if it were on fire; it has apparently burned, and blazed away, and then disappeared. Kepler, writing concerning such a phenomenon, says:—"What it may portend, is hard to determine; and thus much only is certain, that it comes to tell mankind either nothing at all, or high and weighty news, quite beyond human sense and understanding." In allusion to the opinions of some, who explained the novel object by the Epicurean doctrine of a fortuitous combination of atoms, he remarks, with characteristic oddity, yet good sense, "I will tell these disputants, —my opponents,—not my opinion, but my wife's. Yesterday, when weary with writing, and my mind quite dusty with considering these atoms, I was called to supper, and a salad that I had asked for was set before me. 'It seems, then,' said I, aloud, 'that if pewter dishes, leaves of lettuce, grains of salt, drops of water, vinegar, and oil, and slices of egg, had been flying about in

the air from all eternity, it might at last happen, by chance, that there would come a salad.' 'Yes,' says my wife, 'but not one so nice or well dressed as this which I have made for you.'

So I should think; and if the fortuitous combination of atoms could not make a salad, it is not very likely that they could make a world. I once asked a man, who said that the world was a fortuitous concourse of atoms, "Have you ever chanced to have no money, and to be away where you knew nobody who would give you a dinner?" He replied, "Yes, I have." "Well, then," said I, "did it ever happen to you that a fortuitous concourse of atoms made a leg of mutton for you, with some nice boiled turnips, and caper sauce, for your dinner?" "No," he said, "it has not." "Well," I answered, "a leg of mutton, at any rate, even with turnips and caper sauce included, is an easier thing to make than one of these worlds, like Jupiter or Venus."

We are told, in the Word of God, that one star differeth from another star in glory; yet one that is small may give more light to us than a larger star which is farther away. Some stars are what is called variable, they appear larger at one time than another. Algol, in the head of Medusa, is of this kind. We are told that "The star, at the brightest, appears of the second magnitude, and remains so for about two days, fourteen hours. Its light then diminishes, and so rapidly, that in three and a-half hours it is reduced to the fourth magnitude. It wears this aspect rather more than fifteen minutes, then increases, and in three and a-half hours more resumes its former appearance." I am afraid that many of us are variable stars; if we do sometimes wax dim, it will be well if we regain our brightness as quickly as Algol does. Then there are thousands of double stars. I hope that you will each get a wife who will always shine with you, and never eclipse you, for a double star may be very bright at one time, and sometimes be eclipsed altogether. There are also triple stars, or systems, and quadruple systems, and there are, in some cases, hundreds or thousands all spinning round one another, and around their central luminaries. Wonderful combinations of glory and beauty may be seen in the stellar sky; and some of these stars are red, some blue, some yellow, all the colours of the rainbow are represented in them. It would be very wonderful to live in one of them, and to look across the sky, and see all the glories of the heavens that God has made. On the whole, however, for the present, I am quite content to abide upon this little planet, especially as I am not able to change it for another home, until God so wills it.

APPENDIX A.

BOOKS OF ANECDOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS, &c., REVIEWED IN "THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL", AND NOT MENTIONED IN LECTURES V. AND VI. (*See Introductory Notes, and foot-note on page 88.*)

GRAY (REV. JAMES COMPER), and CAREY (REV. C. S.). *The Class and the Desk*. Elliot Stock. 4 vols., 2s. each.

An established favourite with Sunday-school teachers. The busy teacher will find here plenty of terse suggestions that will expand into lessons, and references to other books that will help in their exposition and illumination.

GRAY (REV. JAMES COMPER). *Topics for Preachers and Teachers*. Elliot Stock. 5s.

An invaluable book for all teachers. Full of illustrations, and abounding in matter for explaining and enforcing religious truth. We are glad to find the author of that capital work, *The Class and the Desk*, using his good taste and extensive knowledge to such an admirable purpose as in the book before us. The maps, letterpress, and multitude of woodcuts are all first-class. No words of ours can too strongly commend it to the attention of our readers.

Rays from the East; or, Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures, derived principally from the Manners of Eastern Nations. Religious Tract Society. 6s. (Out of print.) Since published in a series of *Books for the People*, 1d. each.

Beautifully bound, and superabundantly furnished with engravings, this book will win its own way. It is growingly difficult to find anything new in the form of illustrations from the Bible, seeing that so many have reaped the field before; yet the author of this volume . . . has been successful in bringing forth things new as well as old. We owe him thanks for a most attractive and instructive compilation, in which there is no affectation of language, but an evident aiming at simplicity.

The Note-Book, a Collection of Anecdotes and Illustrations for the use of Teachers. Sunday School Union. 1s. 6d. (Out of print.)

Not a very good-looking book so far as the printer's work is concerned, but both cheap and useful . . . This note-book is a small affair, and none the worse for that; it contains some very good things, and is well adapted for the use of teachers and lay preachers.

The Biblical Treasury: an Illustrative Companion to the Bible, for the use of Sunday-school Teachers, Ministers, and Bible Students. Sunday School Union. 14 vols., 2s. each.

Every teacher, without a single exception, should possess a full set of

The Biblical Treasury, and in so doing he will have by him a great store of Scriptural illustrations. This is one of the very best things the Sunday School Union has ever done. . . . It is simply invaluable to the rank and file of the great army of Sunday school teachers.

DENTON (MATTHEW). *Anecdotes Illustrative of Religious and Moral Truth*. Partridge and Co. 2s. (Out of print.)

It is not easy to make a collection of anecdotes which shall be at all novel; our author has been moderately successful. These stories are most of them recognised by us as old acquaintances in books, but there are a few which we have not met with before in a separate form. They will amuse and interest most readers, and some of them will be useful for illustrations, but not all. Friends who have any one of the cyclopædias will have no need of this volume; but those who are not so favoured will do well to procure it.

GOLDING (GODFREY). *The Book of Good Devices, with a Thousand Precepts for Practice*. Cassell and Co. 5s. (Out of print.)

As thought-breeding a book as we have ever met with, wide in the range of its subjects, and yet judicious in its selection of extracts. The pages are encompassed with pithy, proverbial precepts, and many of the passages quoted are masses of terse, sententious utterance. It is altogether a live book, and a very beautiful one.

BALFOUR (THOMAS A. G., M.D.). *God's Jewels; or, a Mineralogical Illustration of Scripture*. Edinburgh: Menzies. 2s. 6d. (Out of print.)

A book upon jewels, and a jewel of a book. We hardly know of an instance in which such a thorough knowledge of gems has been found united with the illustrative faculty. Dr. Balfour is also as sound in his theology as he is profound in his mineralogy. The work is small, but contains more precious material for thought than will often be found in volumes of ten times the size.

LEIFCHILD (REV. J., D.D.). *Remarkable Facts: Illustrative and Confirmatory of Different Portions of Holy Scripture*. With a Preface by his Son. R. D. Dickinson. 2s.

As might be expected from the great age of the author, the illustrations here collected are not such as dazzle by their novelty, but such as edify by their sober earnestness. . . . All our aged ministers should, like Dr. Leifchild, leave behind them some record of personal reminiscences; by this means our treasury of illustrative facts would be enriched, and fresh evidence of the power of the gospel would be supplied. Ministers will find, among these remarkable facts, several of which they could make good use.

MOODY (DWIGHT L.). *Arrows and Anecdotes*. With a sketch of his early life, by JOHN LOBB. Nicholson and Co. 1s. [See page 29.]

Some of these illustrations are original, and others have been borrowed from well-known sources, and modified; we had almost said, *Moodyfied*. Mr. Moody never scrupled to declare that, whatever he found that was good, he appropriated; and he was quite right in so doing. Now that Mr. Lobb has picked out the plums from the pudding, we see some of our own among them, and are glad they were so well used: but we see a

great many of Mr. Moody's own growth, which ministers of the gospel must take care to preserve for future use. This is a wise selection of pithy bits and live stories, such as wake men up, and keep them awake, too.

BARDSLEY (REV. J. W., M.A.). *Illustrative Texts and Texts Illustrated.* Nisbet and Co. 5s.

There was no need for Mr. Bardsley to apologise, or think his illustrations ephemeral; the fact is, that many a preacher and teacher will rejoice over his ninety-and-two portions as one that findeth great spoil. The more of such suggestive books, the better.

PHILLIPS (JOHN RICHARDSON). *Remarkable Providences and Proofs of a Divine Revelation; with Thoughts and Facts for the Weak in Faith, the Doubter, and the Infidel.* Partridge and Co. 7s. 6d. (Out of print.)

A collection of most remarkable facts gathered from all sources. Readers cannot fail to be borne along the stream of interest which flows through these pages.

Anecdotes for the Family and Social Circle. Partridge and Co. 3s. 6d. (Out of print.)

The book is tastefully bound, but the stories are too much worn. We have enough collections of stale anecdotes, we should be glad of a few fresh ones. Still, there are many to whom the incidents will be quite novel, and such will have their money's worth if they purchase this handsome book.

VAUX (REV. J. E., M.A.). *The Preacher's Storehouse; a Collection of Pithy Sayings and Choice Passages on Religious and Moral Subjects.*

G. J. Palmer, 32, Little Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. 7s. 6d.

The plan of this "Storehouse" is good, but we do not think that the compiler has selected the stores so well as he might have done. They are rather a mixed medley, and there is not enough of the gracious element in them to please us. Still, for a High Churchman, the selection of extracts is wonderfully Catholic, and the result must be helpful to young beginners in the ministry. Upon useful theological subjects, pithy quotations are given, consisting of proverbs, metaphors, and expositions: these will supply the preacher with many a fresh thought and striking phrase.

BERTRAM (REV. R. A.). *A Dictionary of Poetical Illustrations.* R. D. Dickinson. 12s. 6d.

One of the most useful books a minister can possess. . . . Even if a man does not quote poetry in his sermons, it is always helpful for him to know what the great bards have said upon his subject. There are certainly better collections than this; but it is a notable addition to those which have gone before.

BERTRAM (REV. R. A.). *A Homiletic Encyclopædia of Illustrations in Theology and Morals.* R. D. Dickinson. 12s. 6d.

This strikes us as being a very valuable compilation, such as might take a lifetime for a man to form for himself. It will be a golden treasury to those who know how to use it discreetly; but it will be of still more

value to those who are led by its example to attempt the production of commonplace-books for themselves. Mr. Bertram must have taken great pains, and exercised much holy industry, in collecting the important extracts which are here carefully arranged and placed under their separate heads. The volume is an important addition to a minister's library.

NEIL (REV. JAMES, M.A.). *Rays from the Realms of Nature; or, Parables of Plant Life.* Lang Neil and Co., Chancery Lane. 2s. 6d.

This is a book after our own heart. It gathers from trees and flowers facts wherewith to set forth moral and spiritual truth. This is the right use of Nature. It is reading one of the works of the Great Author by the light of another, comparing utterance with utterance.

HOOD (REV. E. PAXTON). *The World of Moral and Religious Anecdote.* Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.

This is a new and cheap edition of Mr. Hood's remarkable collection of incidents. We long ago perused these odd, piquant, and notable stories, and we were greatly amused; but we cannot say that we ever thought much of the production so far as the usefulness or even the religiousness of some of the stories is concerned; for certain of the anecdotes should have been suppressed. Our friend could have done much better than collect such "a universe of undigested and unorganised anecdote." Still, having growled our growl, we are bound to add that we should have been very sorry to have missed either *The World of Anecdote*, or *The World of Religious Anecdote*, with which we have beguiled many a pleasant interval of leisure.

LONG (REV. J.). *Eastern Proverbs and Emblems Illustrating Old Truths.* Trübner and Co. 6s.

This book contains a large number of proverbs which have not hitherto entered into our western currency, and the emblems are frequently beautiful and useful; still, it is badly put together, and the matter is not always appropriate to the subject which it is intended to illustrate. Here we have all the makings of a good book, but, for want of a little tact, the work does not come out from the author's hand in so complete a form as it might have done. We feel indebted to the writer for many new symbols and sayings, and if he will use the pruning-knife when bringing out a new edition, his book will become a standard work.

PIKE (RICHARD). *Remarkable Religious Anecdotes.* Derby: Wilkins and Ellis. 1s.

These anecdotes are most of them fresh and striking, and we have enjoyed their perusal. The little book is really not a bad shilling's-worth.

HOYT (J. K.) AND WARD (ANNA L.). *The Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations, English and Latin, with an Appendix of Proverbs, etc.* R. D. Dickinson. 12s. 6d.

A very useful book for a literary man, to whom the copious index will be a great boon. Its production has cost much labour, and it will, in consequence, save labour to those who use it. It is deservedly called "practical", since it is not for show, but for real work. In this respect it excels all other quotation books which have hitherto come under our notice.

NYE (J. L.). *Anecdotes on Bible Texts*. Sunday School Union. 9 vols. (New Testament.) 1s. each.

May the compiler be encouraged to illustrate every book of the Bible in this fashion! Mr. Nye is doing great service to all teachers and preachers. Some of his anecdotes will be well known to his readers; but, as a whole, they are as fresh as they are useful. Who buys these shilling's-worths gets good bargains.

PROSSER (ELEANOR B.). *Fables for "You."* With Illustrations. "Home Words" Office, Paternoster Square. 2s. 6d.

We feel deeply grateful to Mrs. Prosser for these fables. She has not occupied time in giving the moral of each story, but has made every one so plain that it tells its own lesson. (See also page 108).

The Voice of Wisdom. A Treasury of Moral Truths from the Best Authors. Selected by J. E. Edinburgh: Nimmo and Co. 2s. 6d. (Out of print.)

A collection of extracts, proverbs, etc., arranged alphabetically under certain subjects. We do not think the selection is either the best or the worst that could be made. We do not see what end the compiler had in view, for one could hardly make much use of the brief passages which he has arranged. Yet he has at least shown that, out of the old fields cometh all the new corn, and out of the old books cometh all the new matter which men learn; even as Chaucer told us long ago. The quotations are many of them quite fresh, though others are as old as Egyptian mummies. Together, they make up a treasury which many a man might feel rich in possessing, though there are far better volumes of the same order.

HOOD (REV. E. PAXTON). *The World of Proverb and Parable, with Illustrations from History, Biography, and the Anecdotal Table-talk of all Ages.* R. D. Dickinson. 5s. 6d.

This huge volume contains a flowing flood of stories and a mass of information as to the sources where more of the same sort may be found. . . . He who purchases this mountain of proverbs and parables will have a mine of wealth for his money. . . . We are in justice forced to add that we have made gallant attempts to read this book through, but have found it heavy work. It is a wonderful book; but the author does not take pains enough with his materials when he has collected them. After having said so much, we, with unabated earnestness, commend this voluminous work to those who want striking things, and know how to use them.

MACLAREN (REV. ALEXANDER, D.D.). *Pictures and Emblems, being Illustrations from his Sermons.* "Christian Commonwealth" Office, 73, Ludgate Hill. 5s.

This beloved author needs no letters of commendation to our readers. He hath dust of gold. Even his leaf shall not wither. Here we have a wealth of symbol and emblem which cannot be surpassed.

Scientific Illustrations and Symbols; Moral Truths Mirrored in Scientific Facts. By a Barrister of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple. R. D. Dickinson. 7s. 6d.

The idea which is here wrought out is a rich one, and will be further

taken up by others. The scientific facts selected are many of them highly illustrative. The man who could not find metaphors and emblems by the aid of this book, must be dull indeed. This capital volume ought to have a large sale.

ADAMSON (REV. WILLIAM, D.D.). *The Religious Anecdotes of Scotland*. Glasgow: T. D. Morison. 5s.

A fine collection of fine old stories, such as could only have been told in the land of Calvinism and robust manhood. We know most of the narratives; indeed, they must be numbered with thrice-told tales. . . . But many of them will be new to southerners though familiar enough to our northern brethren. Dr. Adamson has compiled a valuable and thoroughly lively book.

THOMSON (W. M., D.D.) *The Land and the Book*. Nelson and Sons. 3 vols., 21s. each.

This is far ahead of all other publications the book upon the *Holy Land and its surrounding territories*. Our obligations to Dr. Thomson can never be fully set forth; he has observed carefully, noted wisely, and recorded patiently. You feel at home with him, he never comes the learned professor over you. . . . Messrs. Nelson's edition, in three handsome volumes, is a prize for which a man of slender means may wisely enter upon a struggle of self-denial, economy, and special industry. The store of suggestion and illustration herein laid up will never be exhausted in any one life-time.

(The original work entitled, *The Land and the Book*, was published in one volume at 7s. 6d., and was therefore in price more suitable for "a man of slender means." It is still procurable, both new and second-hand. Some booksellers offer the three-volume edition for 31s. 6d.)

Anecdotes Illustrative of Old Testament Texts. Hodder and Stoughton.

Very good. We have here a very fair admixture of new anecdotes, together with certain old ones which are inevitable. Good money's worth at six shillings. . . . Get it. There is a companion volume, entitled, *Anecdotes Illustrative of New Testament Texts*.

MARSH (REV. F. E.). *Similes of the Christian Life*. J. F. Shaw and Co.

A preacher or teacher would think of a series of sermons or addresses as he read this book. It is not so much what it contains as what it suggests which makes this a desirable purchase; yet it is good in its own way.

Emblems of the Holy Spirit. Equally gracious, and at the same price, namely, 1s. 6d.

Thirty Thousand Thoughts, being Extracts covering a Comprehensive Circle of Religious and Allied Topics. Edited by the Very Rev. H. D. M. SPENCE, M.A., Rev. JOSEPH S. EXELL, M.A., and Rev. CHARLES NEIL, M.A. Nisbet and Co. 6 vols., 16s. each. (Mr. Dickinson has published an unabridged reprint at 25s., carriage paid.)

Even unto this last we are unable to see the usefulness of the plan of this work. The scheme was laid down at the commencement, but the result is that the extracts are, to our mind, more in a muddle than they would have been had there been no plan at all. Moreover, we do not

judge the extracts themselves to be so excessively valuable as to be worth putting into huge volumes. Some of them are surpassingly precious; but more are excellent common-places, and nothing beyond.

MACKEY (REV. H. O.). *One Thousand New Illustrations for the Pulpit, Platform, and Class.* R. D. Dickinson. 3s. 6d.

Our friend, Mr. Mackey, has collected a thousand illustrations, and he justly calls them "new." He has not occupied space by working out the moral of the fact which he quotes; but he indicates, by a brief heading, the subject which he intended to illuminate. We are glad to see one of our rising ministry addicting himself to searching out striking things.

BAXENDALE (REV. WALTER). *Dictionary of 6,330 Anecdotes, Incidents, and Illustrative Facts, Selected and Arranged for the Pulpit and the Platform.* R. D. Dickinson. 12s. 6d.

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